



NEWS REPORT

A & L GREAT LAKES LABORATORIES, INC. SPRING 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

PSNT - Nitrogen Management Tool

Predicted nitrogen (N) fertilizer shortages make it even more important to apply the correct amount of nitrogen to corn. The pre-sidedress nitrogen test (PSNT) is a tool that can help manage and allocate limited nitrogen supplies.

Briefly, the PSNT involves taking a soil sample (12" deep, 12-15 cores) and having it analyzed for nitrate-nitrogen ($\text{NO}_3\text{-N}$). The $\text{NO}_3\text{-N}$ result is then used to determine how much additional N fertilizer is required. The PSNT is an especially good tool for assessing the nitrogen needs of fields that have been manured. We suggest that ammonium-nitrogen ($\text{NH}_4\text{-N}$) also be analyzed on manured fields because of significant amounts of $\text{NH}_4\text{-N}$ found in PSNT samples we have received.

Our fact sheet "In-Season Soil Nitrate Testing for Corn" provides detailed sampling and interpretative information and is available on our web-site (http://www.algreatlakes.com/FactSheets/soil_nitrate_corn.htm) or by fax (219) 483-5274. PSNT samples received by the lab are analyzed and reported the next business day. Contact us for more information about this important nitrogen management tool.

...and That's the Way it Was

(PART I - A & L Great Lakes Laboratories, 1971-1984)

The Foundations of A&L Great Lakes

It seems like just yesterday. A&L Laboratories started life in a rented house just off the runway at the airport in Memphis, Tennessee. Don Ankerman and Dr. Richard Large, the founders of the original A&L organization sold services in the day and ran tests at night. That was in 1971.

From that humble beginning, the A&L organization has grown to nine independent locations in three countries. Literally millions of analyses are done each year throughout the network of laboratories.

This year, we're celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Fort Wayne laboratory. In the next few issues of our 2001 newsletter, we would like to relate a little of that proud heritage to you.

The Early Years

By 1976, the year A&L Great Lakes was founded, Ankerman and Large had expanded the reach of the business enough in the eastern Midwest to justify a new location. The Fort Wayne laboratory started just before the fall busy season of that year. It was the third A&L location. The lab was housed in a 3,000 square foot leased facility located on Decatur Road in Fort Wayne. There were eight full time employees.

During the first few years of business, A&L Great Lakes



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Experience the Difference

As we celebrate our 25 years in business, we recognize the quality and experience of our staff as one of our core strengths. Seven of our 28 full-time employees have been with A & L Great Lakes Laboratories for 20 years or more.


Jerry Hohla moved to Fort Wayne in 1977 from the Omaha A & L Lab, and helped establish A & L Great Lakes. Through his leadership and vision our laboratory has grown and flourished.

Mike Knight and Julie Bruggner started working in the Agricultural Department in the Fall of 1978. They can both relate stories of “the old days” when 500 soils were a huge sample load.

Lois Parker joined the team in January 1979, and was immediately trained to do pH determinations on soils. Some things never change – pHs are still a starting point for our new technicians.

Dan Kite and Paul Barbour started their careers with A & L in 1980. Dan started setting up a new organics laboratory in the Spring, and Paul was introduced to plant tissue and soil preparation in the Summer. Both have seen a lot of changes in the laboratory.

Jo Ann Nichols came to us in 1981, and will celebrate her 20th Anniversary this year. Jo Ann continues to supply our fertilizer clients with quality results and excellent service.

In addition to our 20+ year team we have four employees with 15-19 years, and four employees with 10-14 years with A & L Great Lakes Laboratories. We are very proud of our “aging” staff, as the experience they have gained translates to quality and consistency for our clients. 



**Left to right, Front row: Lois Parker, Julie Bruggner
Second row: Jerry Hohla, Jo Ann Nichols, Dan Kite
Third Row: Paul Barbour, Mike Knight**


Herbicide Injury - Sampling Strategy

Herbicides can damage non-target plants (those not intended to be treated) when the compound comes in contact with these plants through drift, root uptake, or volatilization. Symptoms of herbicide damage are varied but can be in the form of leaf burn, cupped or twisted growth, and faded or light leaf color.

If you suspect contact has occurred, even before visual symptoms appear, collect samples from the affected plants. Herbicides are rapidly metabolized (broken down) by plants and are often not detectable by laboratory analysis. Often it takes very little herbicide to cause a dramatic affect on a susceptible plant. Sampling quickly and preserving correctly will increase the chances of detecting the compound in the tissue. If the application was done by another individual, find out what herbicide(s) they were using.

Sample by collecting leaves from plants that are alive and are either showing the most visual symptoms or have the greatest likelihood of coming in contact with the herbicide. Place approximately one pound of foliage into a gallon ziplock bag and store it in a freezer.

If you choose to confirm herbicide injury with a lab analysis, accompany the sample with proper legal documentation and use a shipping service that can assure the sample will arrive in it's frozen state.

For more information on plant symptoms from herbicide injury and a list of compounds we can test for, contact A&L Great Lakes Laboratories or visit our website. (www.algreatlakes.com) 

...and That's the Way it Was - continued from page 1

concentrated strictly on the agricultural testing business. This included soil, plant tissues, feeds and fertilizers. At that time all data was hand written and reports were typed by hand.

In 1978, due to the huge amount of labor required to type the growing number of test reports, we acquired our first mini-computer. This represented a significant part of the capital budget. From that time on, the adoption of the latest computer technology has been a high priority.

Our business continued to grow rapidly through the late '70's. In 1979, because of numerous requests from our clients, we decided to expand our testing capabilities by opening a pesticide residue testing lab. This laboratory would later grow to employ over twelve people as we expanded into

GLP related residue work under contract of some of the major agricultural chemical companies.

By 1984, the national A&L organization had expanded to 6 regional laboratories, still owned by Don Ankerman and Richard Large. The laboratory system was becoming difficult to manage from a central location. The individual labs needed to be able to make decisions based on the needs of the local market, laying the foundation for the next great milestone. The individual management teams from each location were permitted to purchase their business. From that time on, each laboratory location operated as an independent business with exclusive territories licensed by A&L. *Be watching for more of A&L's history in "...and That's the Way it Was" in our next edition of News Report.*



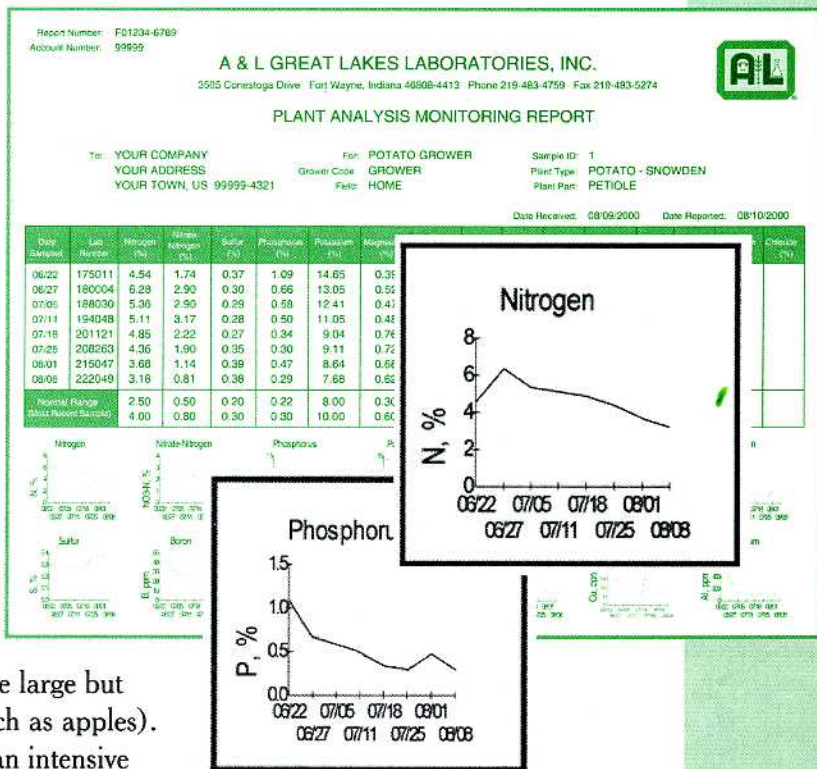
Plant Analysis Monitoring

Nutrient deficiencies significantly reduce crop yield and quality. Plant analysis can determine whether plant growth problems are caused by a nutrient deficiency. Unfortunately, crop yield can already be affected when visual symptoms of nutrient deficiency are present. Monitoring of crop nutrient status on a regular basis through the growing season can be used to predict and "head off" nutrient deficiencies or excesses that can affect crop yield and quality.

Plant analysis monitoring is commonly used for vegetable and fruit crops. These crops take up large amounts of nutrients in a short period of time with root systems that are relatively small for the amount of nutrient needed (most vegetables) or that are large but explore soil that may be low in nutrients (tree fruits such as apples).

Potatoes are one of several crops that benefit from an intensive plant analysis monitoring program. Potato petiole (leaf stem) samples collected and analyzed for nutrient levels on a weekly basis can indicate whether in-season fertilizer applications are needed to maximize yield and quality. For example, nitrogen is commonly applied to potatoes at regular intervals during the growing season. If the nitrate-nitrogen level of the potato petiole is too low for the current plant growth stage, the N rate probably needs to be increased; if the nitrate-nitrogen level is too high for that growth stage, the N rate probably needs to be decreased or the scheduled application delayed. Similar decisions can be made based on analysis results of other nutrients.


Our plant analysis monitoring report (see example) graphs analyses of 14 nutrients by sampling date. This report can be e-mailed to you the same day analyses are completed for quick decision making. Contact us for more information and to enroll your fields in our plant analysis monitoring program.



SOIL TESTING CAPACITY - GROWING TO MEET CUSTOMER NEEDS

Over the past 25 years, A & L Great Lakes Laboratories has progressed from running a few hundred soil samples a day, to running over five thousand a day during the fall of 2000.

Obviously, this growth was accomplished in stages. Initially, we increased our daily sample load by one or two hundred each season, adding equipment or another technician as necessary. The last couple of years have required some more major changes. We doubled our capacity in the soil library, purchased more instruments, and upgraded all of the computers and software to increase speed and performance.


All of this was done with a goal of continuing to provide the quality of service you have come to expect. As we look towards the future, we will continue to evaluate our capabilities and make changes and additions as necessary to make sure your requirements are met. 

Glyphosate & AMPA Analysis Available

Analysis of glyphosate, better known as Round-Up, and its degradation product AMPA is now available.

For additional information on pricing, sampling procedure and sample requirements on soil, water or plant tissue, contact Keith Henley.

Electronic/Paperless Reporting

Reports of all types can be e-mailed to our clients in a format viewable on their computers. Using the Adobe Acrobat Reader software, you can review and print copies of the reports. These files are sent the same day the report is completed, so there's no waiting for the postman to deliver the printout. For those clients who prefer paperless reporting, please contact us and we will be glad to get you set up. There is no additional charge for this service. 



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