

Slow nitrogen saves maize crop

When Jim Carlton realised how much more efficiently he could use nitrogen through ENTEC® technology, he knew he had to give it a shot.

Jim grows maize and sugar cane on his 1,420 hectare property at Ulmarra near Grafton in New South Wales, as well as operating a dairy and cattle finishing operation.

Because of the high rainfall in the region, Jim said nitrogen fertilisers were vulnerable to leaching and denitrification from waterlogging.

“We can get up to 1,600 mm of rain a year and storms in the area can drop up to 150 mm of rain overnight,” he said.

“We find that if we apply all our nitrogen upfront, a lot of it may be lost by the time the crop really needs it.

“Sidedressing nitrogen is also problematic as the ground is often too wet for us to get into the paddocks.”

Last year Jim decided to try ENTEC, a new nitrogen stabilising technology which enhances the staying power of nitrogen, potentially giving growers a way to better match nitrogen supply to crop demand.

“I heard about ENTEC through Norco Rural at Grafton and was keen to try something that would reduce nitrogen losses,” Jim said.

He applied ENTEC Urea at 200 kg/ha with his maize crop at planting in September 2009.

Jim said the ENTEC treatment was particularly beneficial after parts of the crop became waterlogged.

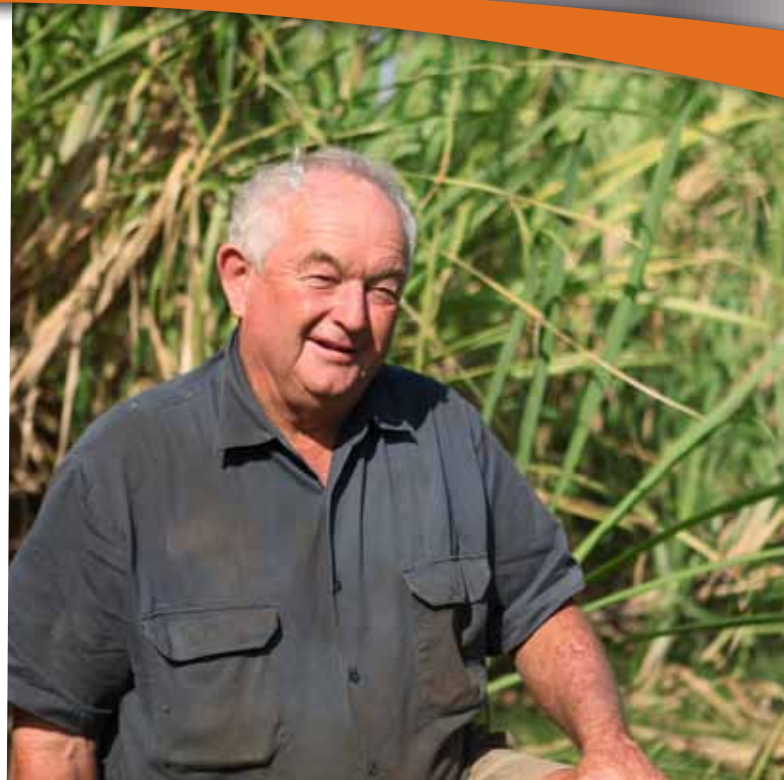
“After heavy rainfall, we find the nitrogen can disappear through leaching, leaving the crop yellow and struggling. We also struggle to get back out on the paddocks to top up nitrogen because it is too wet,” Jim said.

“But once we started using ENTEC Urea, we found that as soon as the crops dried out a bit, they greened up pretty quickly without the need for more nitrogen.”

As well as reducing nitrogen losses, Jim was impressed with the significant increase in yield.

“We generally yield about 12 t/ha in the maize crop, but we were surprised to see this increase to about 17 t/ha, despite the amount of waterlogging that occurred earlier in the season.”

Jim said after his experience with ENTEC last year, he began using it in his sugar cane blocks, as well as in the winter cereal crops he planted this year.



Using ENTEC Urea has helped Jim Carlton boost yields and reduce the potential for nitrogen leaching on his farm.

Steve Leeson from Norco Rural at Grafton said ENTEC has many advantages for sugar cane and maize growers in the area.

ENTE C keeps the nitrogen in the ammonium form for longer, which is the preferred form of nitrogen for maize crops.

“Over the last few years we have experienced high rainfall in the district. During this time we have noticed that maize yields have dropped off and protein levels have been extremely low, which is linked to a nitrogen deficiency,” Steve said.

“By using ENTEC fertilisers, growers can help reduce the nitrogen loss through leaching and denitrification.

“This reduction in nitrogen losses may also mean that growers may have the opportunity to reduce their application rates, saving money in fertiliser and cartage.”

Jim Carlton on ENTEC fertilisers :

- Helped reduce nitrogen losses after heavy rainfall
- Increased yields in silage crops
- Reduced the need for sidedressing nitrogen later in the season.

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