How To Get The Most From A Foliar Application

Timing is key with foliar applications. One of the more common reasons for lack-luster results from a foliar spray is that the material was not applied at the most optimal time.

Foliar fertilization is a particularly useful part of a fertility program when the principles behind it are understood and it's executed correctly. Foliar fertilization enables managers to correct turf deficiencies, strengthen weak or damaged turf, increase the rate of growth, and overall grow better healthier turf. Done correctly with quality products, foliar fertilization can result in immediate (within hours) improvements in plant health and growth.

No matter how well a program provides for a healthy rootzone, the presence of a particular chemical element in the soil may not be enough. Certain soil conditions, such as pH, excess moisture, hot or cool temperatures or a poor root system may render a nutrient or nutrients unavailable to the plant through the root.

Foliar fertilization can be designed to meet a plant's specific needs for one or more micro and macro nutrients -- especially trace nutrients. Recent evidence indicates that foliar fertilization also stimulates the plant roots themselves to become more efficient in the uptake of all nutrient requirements.

Foliars are best applied when the plant is cool and filled with water (turgid). This preferably means spraying during a cooler time of day like early in the morning, when humidity is up and leaves are wet

with dew. Cool evenings also work well as long as irrigation is not applied for 6 hours after application. Grigg Brothers® continuing research shows spraying in the middle of a hot day will give you reduced effectiveness in absorption of most nutrients.

Always mix the spray tank thoroughly and apply in as much water as possible, typically 1 to 2 gallons per 1,000 ft^2 and more if you are tank mixing with other chemicals. Use enough water to coat both the upper and lower leaf surfaces where practical, the longer the spray stays wet on the leaf the better the absorption.

Experience has found that for optimum application of foliar fertilizers, using a flat fan nozzle or air induction nozzle tend to work the best.

Most Grigg Brother® Proven Foliar® fertilizers contain at least some nitrogen to act as an electrolyte to carry nutrients into the leaf and also contain some amount of phosphorous for internal circulation and translocation.

The use of Ultraplex®, which contains a wetting agent, will prevent formation of droplets on the leaves to maximize the amount that will stick to the leaves and aids in absorption. Ultraplex® will also buffer high pH water which also aids in absorption and adds additional nutrition as well as biostimulants and plant hormones.