

FITZGERALD FAMILY DAIRY FARM INCREASES PRODUCTION

BY STEPHANIE LANIER

BRIDGELAND, UT ~ Richard Fitzgerald and his family know that vitamins and supplements are important for their family's health. In order to help their dairy cows and calves build a strong stomach, they too are given feed supplements. If it works for us and our cows, surely the soil would be the same. Last year they decided to supplement the ground for their crops as well.

We visited with Richard, who told us about his program. With around 850 acres of crops on the farm, they started with a few trial fields on their first cutting of hay. "I had a couple of trials that I put it on where the ground wasn't quite as good," says Richard. "It hadn't been producing as good of hay. Using my field sprayer I applied 14 oz. per acre, a little less than the recommended amount."

He went on, "Throughout the year it seemed to be getting better - it really picked up production. I was really excited about that; I guess that's why I decided to use more of it as the year went on - I could see the results right there." They then put it on the fields through pivots on the hay, silage and grain corn, applying it at about 27 oz. per acre.

"I could see some great advantages to using the supplements and am excited about the results," he says. "The plants looked much healthier. We didn't have any troubles with the bugs and the alfalfa had more leaves. In addition, there was a fast recovery after the first cutting of hay. The soil retained the moisture better. As soon as we cut it, it grew right back because the water was right there. Most years we have to water it before it grows back; this year we didn't. And for a hot year, that was really good."



From left to right: Randy, Ryan, Richard & Brent Fitzgerald - Fitzgerald Dairy Farm

He not only found great results in the hay, but noticed that the corn did just as well. "We had an excellent production of corn this year. It stood tall, it produced well, it was healthy and the ground was loosened."

Richard mentioned that he was also excited about how much money he saved on fertilizer: "I only used about half of the fertilizer that I usually do."

"Because feed prices are more expensive and feed is harder to get ahold of, I decided to look into the biological part of farming. I read quite a few articles in magazines about microbials, that's what got me thinking about changing. I looked into quite a few different companies, but this one seemed to be the one for us; we felt good about the product and the families behind it."

"I think if other people only knew what this product could do for them, they would be using it too."

"We are very excited about the results that we have seen. I'm glad there's something out there that has a residual - we can apply a little each year, have it build up the soil and get things back to nature. Let nature take care of it. Everything looked really good, and we will certainly be applying some more of it this coming year."



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