



Moving into 2015...

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Well as usual I have fallen a little bit behind. Unfortunately I have not heard too many "Hey! I haven't seen a newsletter" so my ego is taking a beating.

Let's get into it. There have been some changes in our Goleta branch. Andy Burdullis and Mat Smith have left to pursue other opportunities. We are proud to announce that Danny Cavaletto has joined AG RX and will work out of our Goleta branch. For those of you in the Santa Barbara area you may notice a new delivery person as well. Miguel Hurtado

has replaced Robert Gomez who retired in November after 37 years. Both Andy and Mat as well as the rest of the staff in Goleta, Richard Zamora and John Welty, have been very helpful in this transition. We at AG RX would like to thank Andy, Mat and Robert for their dedication and years of service to both AG RX and their customers.

Our annual Citrus/Avocado meetings have been scheduled. March 12th in Santa Paula and March 13th in San Luis Obispo. Please mark your calendars, we

hope to see you.

Finally, we at AG RX thank all of you for your business and support in 2014. As we move into 2015 the challenges that were present last year are still there and some have gotten worse. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with you to meet these challenges.



Chris Oliva
Sales Manager

Ventura County

You know it never really slows down here in Ventura county, but the winter time does afford one a chance to reflect on the past season(s) and prepare for the new one that is just around the corner. So let me share my musing with you.

I often like to tell this story, because it reflects what I have learned over almost 40 seasons here, that is a little along the idea of the famous quote by Mark Twain, "The rumors of my death (demise) have been greatly exaggerated." When I first went to work for Oxnard Pest Control in the spring of 1976, I asked my boss, Al Teuber (who recently passed away), how long he thought I might have a career in the Citrus industry in Ventura county. I remember it very distinctly and he told me maybe 15 more years. That has always stuck with me, now in my 39th year here! Based on his prediction I

should have been looking for a new location to live about 1990, yet my family and I are still here. I believe that when I first arrived here there were approximately 100,000 irrigated acres in Ventura county which eventually climbed to about 105,000 and now down a little under 100,000 again. Yes, Oxnard and Ventura seemed to be closer together as is Oxnard and Camarillo, but we are still farming here pretty much the same way we were 40 years ago, albeit with a different range of crops. That is normal change.

All of this being said now because of the concern over the Asian citrus psyllid, along with the disease it carries, Huanglongbing, or Citrus greening. This is a threat to the Citrus industry of California, but I really believe we can handle it. The problem is that what we are being ask to do (and the effects of the management programs) is somewhat disruptive to what we have come to see as normal. That happens with

change. We have faced invasive pests in the past and will continue to face them in the future. There are some pretty scary new pests out there that will affect others of our crops and than we will need to deal with them. What have I seen in the past? Mediterranean fruit fly (remember that in the 90's?), Glassy winged sharpshooter, Persea mite, Avocado thrips, Bagarada bug, Whiteflies (multiple in avocados, citrus, strawberries, and vegetables) and the hits just keep on coming.

My final thoughts. Hang in there. We have faced imminent disasters in the past, we are facing them now, and we will face them in the future. It is just part of life and after almost 40 years I am still going strong working in the agricultural environment I love in Ventura county



Dave Holden

AG RX

Citrus & Avocado

Meetings

March 12th -

Santa Paula

March 13th -

San Luis Obispo

RSVP at:

customerservices@agr.com



Understanding Calcium

Growers and agricultural consultants universally recognize the importance of calcium in plants and in the soil. Many crops will benefit from an increased focus on opportunities to improve calcium management. A brief review of the benefits and how calcium benefits crops would be beneficial.

There are three primary benefits of calcium, they are:

1. Soil structure
2. Cell wall integrity
3. Root growth

Soil Structure

Soil structure is defined as the relative aggregation of the soil colloids. Another term that can be accurately substituted for soil structure is soil flocculation. Simply stated, the soil has a net-negative charge. Calcium is a di-valent cation (positively charged) and is attracted to the negatively charged colloids. Because of the unique molecular size and electrical charge of calcium, it has the ability to attach to one colloid exchange site and also attach to another. This process creates a better growing environment by “opening up” the soil. It also creates better quality and quantity of micro-pore space. Feeder roots live in a thin film of water in the micro-pore space.

It is important to note that sodium has the opposite effect on soil structure as calcium because it attaches to only one colloid and causes de-flocculation or dispersing of the soil colloids. Naturally, one of the key strategies to effectively minimize the effect of salinity is a good calcium management plan.

A soil test is an excellent tool to determine the relative calcium opportunities. Critical decisions are greatly benefited with the information from a soil test.

Product Overview: *PeneCal is a reacted plant nutrient product high in calcium (10%) and surfactant (22%). It works by reducing surface tension of water and delivering water and calcium to micro-pore space in the soil.*

Cell Wall Integrity

Calcium plays an integral role in the development and relative strength of plant cell walls. Stronger cell walls are more resistant to both biotic and abiotic stress. Calcium uptake in the plant must occur during periods of cell development in order to assure adequate calcium in the cells. Proper plant calcium nutrition is dependent upon many important factors, including:

- Nutritional balance, including optimum Boron nutrition
- Quantity and quality of roots
- Irrigation management

Product Overview: *Mainstay Calcium Si is a reacted plant nutrient product high in calcium (10%) and silicon (22%). It works by strengthening cell walls and reducing oxidative stress in plants.*

Root Growth

Plants must exert a great deal of force to move roots through the soil profile. This new root growth requires adequate soluble calcium at the root tip in order for optimum growth to occur. If plant available, or soluble calcium is inadequate the plant compensates by growing less roots.

The best to determine if adequate soluble calcium is available is with a soil test that combines both a chemical extraction as well as a soluble past extraction.

Product Overview: *Mainstay Calcium is a reacted plant nutrient product high in calcium (20%). It works by high root absorption due to microencapsulation technology.*

Summary

Crops with a comprehensive calcium management plan tend to yield more, suffer less stress, tolerate salts and deficit irrigation better, and produce better quality crops. A visit with your AG RX consultant on this topic might prove to be very beneficial. They have access to a great deal of knowledge and experience on this topic.



-John Kelly

I AM AG RX - Helen VanSlyke



What is your background? I grew up in Ventura and at the age 17, I joined the Marine Corps and was a purchasing agent for most of my 5 year active duty tour. After leaving the Marine Corps, I moved back to Oxnard got married and had a child. After 21 years divorced, I remarried in 2012.

How did you get started in this business? I began working as an Account Receivable Clerk at Seaboard Produce in Oxnard. I was there for nearly 10 years. In October 1994, I started here at AG RX as a receptionist/file clerk. A year later I was transferred to the billing/accounts receivable and collections department. Finally, several years later was transferred into the Accounts Payable position where I remain till today. In October it will be 21 years here at AG RX.



What are some of your greatest challenges you face in your job? At the age of 5 I was diagnosed with RP (Retinitis Pigmentosa). RP causes progressive loss in vision. I am currently legally blind and use a walking cane. As a result of my vision loss, I have had to use assistive and adaptive technology to do everyday work task. AG RX has been very supportive with my adaptive technology and is sensitive to my constant changing physical and emotional needs due to my vision loss.

What are your favorite aspects of your job? I really enjoy working with our outside vendors, working closely with the accounting supervisor and our CFO Kimberly. I enjoy all the detail oriented tasks and the confidence my supervisor has in delegating new projects.



What are some of your interests? I LOVE dancing. And recently reignited a passion for crocheting and writing. Halloween is one of my favorite holidays. Ten years ago I began the tradition of our Halloween Costume and Pumpkin carving constant.

We have always admired and respected Helen's work ethic. She only knows how to do "A" work and anything less is unacceptable. We really love her "Don't take yourself too seriously" attitude, her caring and compassionate soul.

When we say our employees are our greatest asset, Helen definitely lives up to that statement. Thanks Helen you are one in a million.

AG RX welcomes new PCA.



A big AG RX welcome to Danny Cavaletto. We feel very fortunate to have him become a part of our PCA staff. Danny will be working out of our Goleta office servicing all of our Santa Barbara area customers.

Danny can be reached at the following;

Office: (805)681-1686

Cell: (805) 775-6671

E-mail: Dannyc@agrx.com.

Visit us at any one of our locations

OXNARD -Main Office –751 South Rose Avenue, Oxnard, CA 93030
Store (805)486-5788 Fax (805)240-1737

Store Hours: M-F: 7am-5pm Sat: 7am-12pm

FILLMORE- 186 East Telegraph Road, Fillmore, CA 93015
(805)524-2687 Fax (805)524-1412

Store Hours: M-F: 7am-4pm Sat: CLOSED

SOMIS - 3250 Somis Road, Somis, CA. 93066
(805)386-2674 Fax (805)386-1234

Store Hours: M-F: 7am-4:30pm Sat: 7am-12pm

GOLETA - 6150 Francis Botello Road, Goleta, CA. 93117
Store (805)681-1686 Fax (805)681-1689

Store Hours: M-F: 7:30 am-4:00pm Sat: CLOSED

SANTA MARIA - 609 South Depot, Santa Maria, CA. 93456
(805)925-2463 Fax (805)928-5329

Store Hours: M-F: 7am-5pm Sat: 7am-12pm



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www.agrx.com

Providing our Customers with Information, Products and Services for Quality Plant Growth in a Safe and Environmentally Sound Manner while providing a Safe and Productive Work Environment for our Employees.

Did you know?

AG RX sells potting soil and a variety of seeds?



Visit one of our locations for more great buys.