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SOUTHEAST GEORGIA PECAN PRESS

*The Official Newsletter of the UGA Cooperative Extension
Pecan Agent Cohort*



Vidalia Onion & Vegetable Research Center

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COST OF FERTILIZER

By Dr. Lenny Wells, UGA Pecan Horticulturalist

Recent events have led to a big increase in fuel prices. When fuel prices increase so do fertilizer prices. Like fuel, fertilizer is a global market. **45% of the world's urea comes through the Strait of Hormuz.** Even if we aren't getting our fertilizer directly from there, that pinch point creates a potential shortage. At budbreak, pecan growers will need the bulk of their annual fertilizer applications. So, exactly how should we manage this? Fortunately, as a pecan farmer you are in a much better position to weather this storm than someone growing an annual crop.

Urea and most other forms of N are directly tied to the cost of fuel because natural gas is used in their production. As of last week the 18% and 19% liquid formulations that are made as a by-product of another process had not increased and should not increase as much since they are not tied directly to fuel costs. This may offer an alternative, although I don't know the current pricing specifics for these formulations. **As of last week, urea had increased by 40% over last year's price.** Thus, it may lend additional urgency to our regular recommendation to split nitrogen (N) applications for pecans.

Normally we recommend a total rate for mature trees of 100-125 lbs N/acre. There has never been a study for pecans in the Southeastern US that indicates a need for more than this. However, pecans like to be spoon fed a little all along throughout the year and the nitrogen demand of the tree is based mostly on crop load. Under normal conditions we recommend splitting your N applications with approximately 1/2 to 3/4 of that being applied within 2 weeks after budbreak. Usually, that would be about 75 lbs N applied in the spring.

COST OF FERTILIZER CONT...

By Dr. Lenny Wells, UGA Pecan Horticulturalist

Given the current situation, it would likely be a better idea, economically, to apply 50 lbs N/acre as a spring N application and then wait to see what your crop load looks like this summer. If the crop load is there to justify it, you can come back with another 50 lbs N in June or split that again between June and August. If the crop load is not there, the 50 lbs you apply in spring will be enough.

In all actuality, if your orchard has been well managed in the past, that 50 lbs N per acre applied in spring would likely be enough even with a crop load for one year. That is the beauty of growing pecan trees. **Most studies on pecan N fertilization show that control trees receiving no N will take 2 to 6 years of no fertilization before any noticeable drop is observed in yield, quality or leaf N.** I am not recommending that you do not fertilize your trees, but if economics dictate that you put out a little less in 2026, it will not hurt anything in the long run - as long as the fertility of your orchard has been previously well maintained and you can return to normal fertilization practices the following year. If you have a good stand of clover in your orchard (especially if it has been there for a few years), you can count on significant late season N availability from the clover as well. (Make sure when you make any N applications to the orchard, you apply it only over the tree row and not to the middles between the rows where clover is growing. If clover receives an application of N it will not fix its own N from the atmosphere.)

I am told the price of phosphorus (P) is also up. There is also a big opportunity for many growers to save money on P, K, Zn and lime. Most well managed orchards have adequate to high levels of P and Zn in both soil and leaf samples. As a matter of fact, this is quite common.

When this is the case, an annual maintenance application will not move the needle on anything. The same may be true for K in some orchards, though to a lesser extent. Sandy soils will need K more often. For lime, if your pH is above 6.0, there is no reason to lime. See Table 1 (right) to help you determine if, when, and how you need to apply P,K, Zn, and lime. To utilize this table appropriately, you need your previous season’s leaf tissue samples and your most recent soil samples. A number of growers, including myself, have used this structure for many years. It works well. Additionally, a number of growers in 2026 have noted the cost savings of fertilizer by utilizing this table already. More details about this are listed on the UGA Pecan Blog.

Pecan Soil Fertilizer			
	Soil	Leaf	Decision
Phosphorus (P)	<40 lbs/acre	----	Broadcast
Phosphorus (P)	>40 lbs/acre	<0.12	Narrow Band
Phosphorus (P)	>40 lbs/acre	>0.12	Do Not Apply
Potassium (K)	<125 lbs/acre	----	Broadcast
Potassium (K)	>125 lbs/acre	<1.1 %	Narrow Band
Potassium (K)	>125 lbs/acre	>1.1%	Do Not Apply
Zinc (Zn)	<15 lbs/acre	----	Broadcast
Zinc (Zn)	>15 lbs/acre	<50 ppm	Inject Zn
Zin (Zn)	>15 lbs/acre	>50 ppm	Do Not Apply
Soil pH	>6.0	----	Do Not Apply

Table 1. Simplifying soil fertilizer decisions using this table.

2025 PRE-EMERGENT WEED CONTROL

By Andrew Sawyer, Area Pecan Agent & Bryan Wilkins, Auburn Dept. of Horticulture

For my third year utilizing the Vidalia Onion & Vegetable Research Center for efficacy and economics of pre-emergent herbicides of pecan, I was grateful to join Auburn Horticulturalist, Mr. Bryan Wilkins, in replicating these plots. Our focus was on comparing a one-time, full rate application of Chateau (12 oz/acre), the half-rate application of Alion (3.5 oz/acre), and Simazine applied the year after Alion. This was the first year we used Mission; therefore, I would like to see it one more time before significant analyzing. Our ratings consist of overall weed control at particular days after treatment (DAT). We push these herbicides hard, rating over 120 DAT. Generally, if the herbicide works past 60 DAT, it is considered to do well.

Viewing the cost analysis between both locations, we used a comparison cost between common post-emergent herbicide uses including glyphosate and glufosinate. Since these are used together and separately, we emulated a summer post-emergent weed control program for non-bearing pecan. Since post emergent requires more applications, UGA Economists analyses labor and fuel cost per acre in addition to herbicide cost.

Vidalia Onion & Vegetable Research Center Toombs County, GA



Figure 1. Simazine @ 3 quart / acre behind Alion - 70 DAT



Figure 2. Chateau @ 12 oz/ acre - 90 DAT

Gulf Coast Research & Education Center Baldwin County, AL



Figure 3. Alion @ 3.5 oz/ acre - 90 DAT



Figure 4. Chateau @ 12 oz/ acre - 90 DAT

VORC – 90 DAT Control & Cost

	<u>% Control</u>	<u>Cost / acre *</u>
1. Mission (2.8 oz)	75.0	\$54.98
2. Alion (3.5 oz)	65.0	\$84.02
3. Chateau (12 oz)	61.6	\$51.75
4. Centrus '23 – BrakeOn '24	59.0	\$0
5. Mission (2.8 oz) + Simazine (2 qt)	58.3	\$77.12
6. Centrus (3 oz)	55.0	\$97.23
7. Chateau (6 oz)	45.0	\$39.99
8. Simazine (bh Alion) 3 qt	45.0	\$50.37
9. BrakeOn (21 oz) + Matrix (4 oz)	28.3	\$83.27**
10. Glyphosate 2qt + Glufosinate 24oz	N/A	\$121.16

GREC – 90 DAT Control & Cost

	<u>% Control</u>	<u>Cost / acre *</u>
1. Alion (3.5 oz)	96.3	\$84.02
2. Centrus (3 oz)	94.6	\$97.23
3. BrakeOn (21 oz) + Matrix (4 oz)	81.6	\$83.27**
4. Chateau (12 oz)	78.0	\$51.75
5. Mission (2.8 oz)	50.0	\$54.98
6. Chateau (6 oz)	45.0	\$39.99
7. Simazine (bh Alion) 3 qt	20.0	\$50.37
8. Mission (2.8 oz) + Simazine (2 qt)	10.0	\$77.12
9. Glyphosate 2qt + Glufosinate 24oz	N/A	\$121.16

Tables 2 & 3 - 2025 UGA and Auburn effective control at 90 days after treatment compared to its relative cost.

*UGA Ag Econ Department prices for 2025 includes glyphosate + glufosinate @ \$24.34 per acre and fuel + labor cost (\$3.89) per acre.

**Includes only glyphosate at \$16.02 per acre.

AROUND THE DISTRICT



Figure 5. Jenkins Co Agent Scout Carter and Screven Co Agent Jacob Atkinson visit with growers in Coopersville, GA on Jan 15th

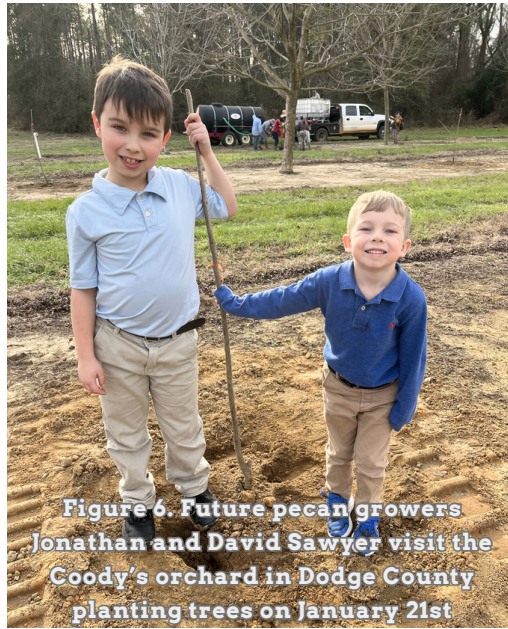


Figure 6. Future pecan growers Jonathan and David Sawyer visit the Coody's orchard in Dodge County planting trees on January 21st



Figure 13. Pruning pecan trees in Bulloch County on January 23rd



Figure 11. I am presenting pecans at the Midway Elementary School Ag Day in Pierce County on March 24th



Figure 12. A great meeting and turnout for the Johnson/Laurens County Pecan Update in Wrightsville on March 17th



Figure 10. Tattnall Co Agent Jonathan Smith pruning at the VOVRC on March 17th



Figure 14. Photo by grower and former 4-H Agent, Kevin Tatum, in Tattnall County, Jan 28th



Figure 15. UGA Pecan Team Dr. Clemen Oliviera, Andrew Sawyer, Dr. Apurba Barman and Dr. Lenny Wells on February 25th

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All materials written and reviewed by
the UGA Extension Pecan Cohort.

Upcoming Events

March 31 - April 1, 2026 - **Georgia Pecan Grower's Association Conference** - Perry, GA

June 18 - 19, 2026 - **Tri-State Pecan Grower's Association Meeting**

