# Area Crop Report 10/14 – 10/18

**Fall Timeframe Best for Soil Sampling?**

While soil sample analysis data is important regardless of its timing, there can be debate of spring versus fall sampling. There is no right answer to the question of when, however our agronomy team leans heavier toward the latter months for a few reasons:

**1. Ability to plan ahead:** Soil samples pulled in the fall gives growers more flexibility, in regards to time during the winter months, to evaluate the analysis and create a management plan going forward into spring. These plans can incorporate application methods, fertilization types, correct rates, product selection, and application timing. These tests also allow producers to work closely with their agronomists to see areas where fertilization, and cost, can be reduced.

**2. Product application timeliness:** Understanding your buffer pH and the amount of lime needed to raise your values to an optimum level, 6.5-6.8, can be ideal. Ag lime can take up to six months for it to raise pH, so having soil samples done in the fall and applying at correct levels, based off the lime ECC%, will benefit crops planted in the spring/early summer. Phosphorus and Potassium also are not readily available nutrients and take time to breakdown, fixate, into soil profiles.

**3. Fertilizer pricing breakdown:** Based on demand curves, fertilizer is often cheaper in fall months than during spring when demand is higher. Fall pulled soil samples give growers a better idea of total quantities per product needed for growing seasons and can plan accordingly. There may also be a pre-pay incentive as well, locking in your fertilizer costs at a predicted lower value than spring expectations.

Corn commodity price comparison that is still relevant even in today's market, half a century later.

**A Potential New Threat to Area Corn Production: Corn Stunt Spiroplasma**

Corn stunt spiroplasma, (CSS, *Spiroplasma kunkelii*) has been confirmed in 26 Kansas counties, ranging from far Northeast to far Southwest. The disease is spread (vectored), and can only be spread, by corn leafhoppers which have been confirmed in additional counties in Kansas through field scouting. These hemipterans acquire the pathogens within minutes of feeding on infected corn plants, but it can take up to 30 days for the hopper to actual infect a healthy corn plant. They can be identified as light tan to yellowish-white in color, approximately 1/8$^{th}$ inches long, and have two distinct dark spots between the antennae and eyes. Later planted or replanted corn has been found to have a higher level of the disease, with sweet corn also showing positive reports. Symptoms may include, but not limited to; shortened internodes, stunted stature as a result of, and red discoloration similar to a potassium deficiency. While the disease has not been positively identified in our direct and surrounding counties, it is now something to be mindful of. Corn stunt disease had previously been limited to areas of Southern Texas, Florida, and California in the U.S. With the vast majority of corn already harvested in the area, this is more of a potential concern for upcoming growing seasons.

Kansas counties in yellow have been positively identified for CSS

"***Nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing.***" **Oscar Wilde**