

The Utilization of Albion[®] Plant Nutrition Technology in the Production of Strawberries in California

by Dave Holden edited by Jeremy O'Brien

INTRODUCTION

Strawberry production has been a major source of revenue for both the Central and Southern California coastal growing districts. California contributes 88% of the total US strawberry production. The purpose of this trial was to demonstrate improvements in crop vigor, quality, and production derived from the use of Albion[®] nutrients, along with how T.E.A.M.[®] (Technical Evaluation of Albion Minerals) recommendations could help the overall nutrient management for this crop.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This trial took place in Oxnard, California. It was laid out as a strip-type demonstration trial with data collection completely randomized for soil, leaf, vigor, and growth analysis. Production data was collected from four flagged replicates of forty plants each, from each of the treatments. Treatments consisted of a grower-standard program, an Albion-standard

program, and an Albion program based upon T.E.A.M. analysis of the leaves. Both the Albion-standard program and the one based on T.E.A.M. suggest materials and rates utilizing many of the Metalosate[®] products, with particular emphasis on Metalosate Zinc and Metalosate Copper. Nine applications were made between November 15, 2006, and March 2, 2007, on a two to three week interval.



FIGURE 1. INCREASED CROWN DEVELOPMENT

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collection consisted of early analysis of new bloom and fruit set; average plant development for size, crown development, and vigor; plant

leaf mineral content; and, finally, in-season production analysis.

Significant improvements were observed for both early bloom and new fruit set in both the Albion standard program and the Albion program with T.E.A.M. analysis.

There were also significant improvements in both whole-plant and root weights in the both of the Albion treatments when compared to the grower's standard program. This was also true for the plants when measured mid-season.

Average crown development was measured on two dates. Production is directly related to the number of new growing points (or crowns) to be found on the plant. The higher the number of crowns, the better the

production yields. Again, significant improvement in crown development was observed by mid-season for both Albion programs.

The average leaf zinc and copper levels were consistently

Plant Nutrition Newsletter

higher in the two Albion programs when compared to the grower's standard program.

Figure 3 shows the net return per acre to the grower from the two Albion programs over the grower's standard program. As can be seen in this chart, both Albion programs yielded significant improvements to the grower's net returns for this crop over the grower's standard program maintained in this trial.

For more information on how the Metalosate products can help you to become more profitable and for the complete report of this research project please contact your local Albion Plant Nutrition representative. www.albionminerals.com



FIGURE 2. STRAWBERRIES FROM THE TEST LOCATION

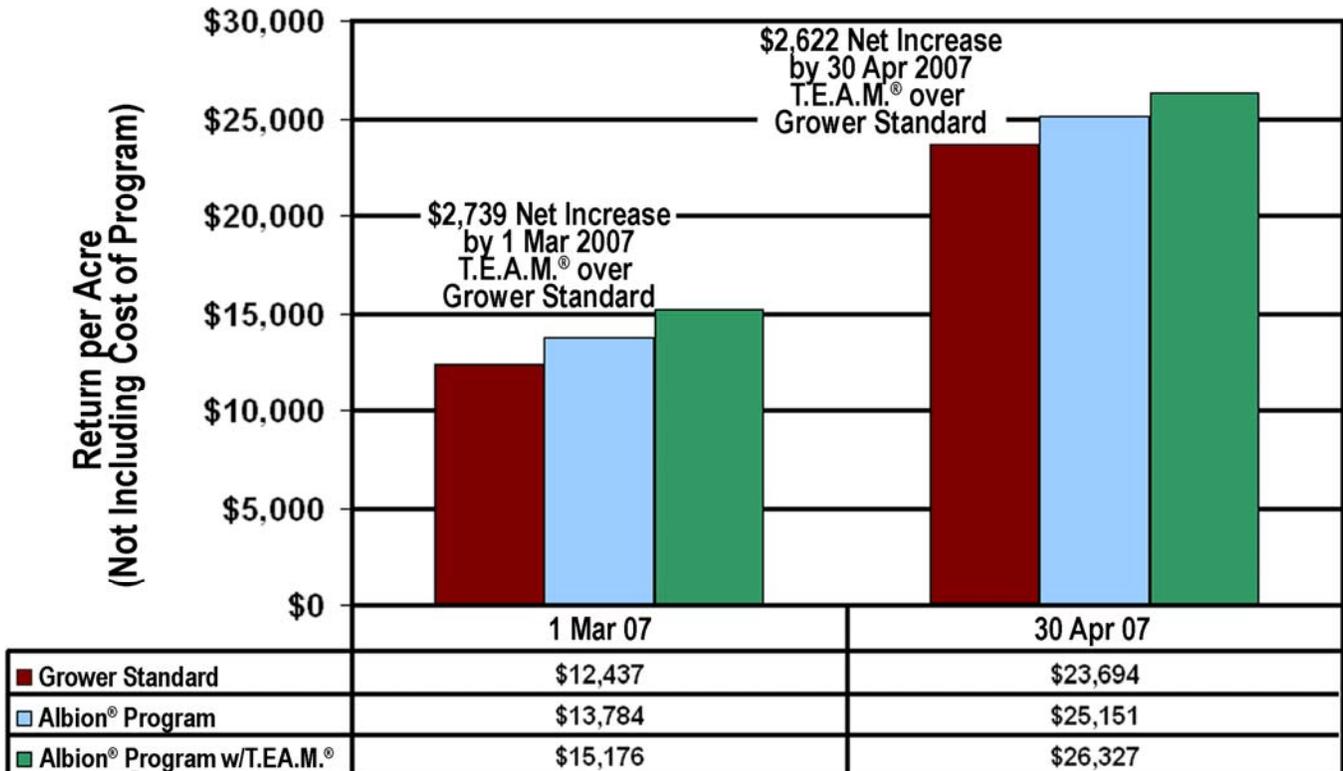


FIGURE 3. NET RETURN PER ACRE AFTER PICKING COSTS (LABOR, TRANSPORT, AND BOXES) BASED ON USDA SHIPPING-POINT PRICES FOR EACH WEEK.

Albion Plant Nutrition
 101 North Main Street
 Clearfield, Utah 84015 USA
 [P] +1•801•773•4631 | [TF] 800•453•2406
 [F] +1•801•773•4633
 [e] PlantNutrition@AlbionMinerals.com
 © 2008 Albion Plant Nutrition. All rights reserved.

www.AlbionMinerals.com