



Technical Bulletin: Drought Stress on Hay and Pasture Fields

Hay and Pasture Growers Face Drought Related Issues



2012 has been one of the worst years for farmers in a very long time. The drought has had many adverse effects not only on your plants, but on the soil environment as well. The extreme temperatures affect the soil biology by killing many of the microbes from the soil surface to a depth of 2 to 3 inches.

Soil structure and texture are affected when the soil colloids dry out and collapse on each other creating extremely compacted soils. This has a major impact on the root systems already established in these soils. They too will cease to function, and without adequate rainfall and time, your hay and pasture fields will begin to die back in plant population, leading to poor yields, increased weed pressure, or finally unsustainable fields.

What can be done? Soil is a living ecosystem, so when extreme drought shuts it down, you must reactivate it to restore soil structure, texture and microbial activity. Without the vitality of the soil environment, your hay and pasture will not have the growth or nutrient and protein values needed for quality livestock and hay production.

Even if next spring farmers were to try and re-establish their fields with new seeding, without revitalizing the soil there will be serious problems in getting new seeds established. Because of the compaction issues, once the new seeding hits the compacted layer, it will dry out quickly and perish,

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or it cannot develop an adequate root structure, leading to poor stands. Before you get too discouraged, there is help available.

Monty's® Plant Food Company has been providing solutions to farmers for over 20 years. Since this drought extends to most parts of our country, drastic measures need to be taken to not only bring our soils back to a sustainable level, but also to meet farmers' production goals and livestock needs. Although you

may fertilize each year, the health of your soil ecosystem will determine how much of that fertilizer actually reaches your plants. A healthy and robust microbial population is required to convert and deliver nutrients to your plants' root system.

Monty's Liquid Carbon™ is far more than the name implies. Liquid Carbon contains not only organic carbon as a food source for the microbes in your soil, but also the active ingredient necessary for soil life and the vital reactions – release of nutrients – that happen in the soil continuously. Liquid Carbon has been improving soils for farmers for many years. Even in this year of extreme drought, we have received testimonials from farmers like you telling us how Monty's products have helped restore their soil in past years so that they have now weathered this drought better than their neighbors. They have said that where they used Monty's products, they have not suffered the complete devastation others in their area have.

Fall treatment and "winterization" of hay and pasture fields will reap big dividends next spring and summer. Applying Liquid Carbon at ½ gallon per acre this fall will help put your soils on the road to recovery!



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