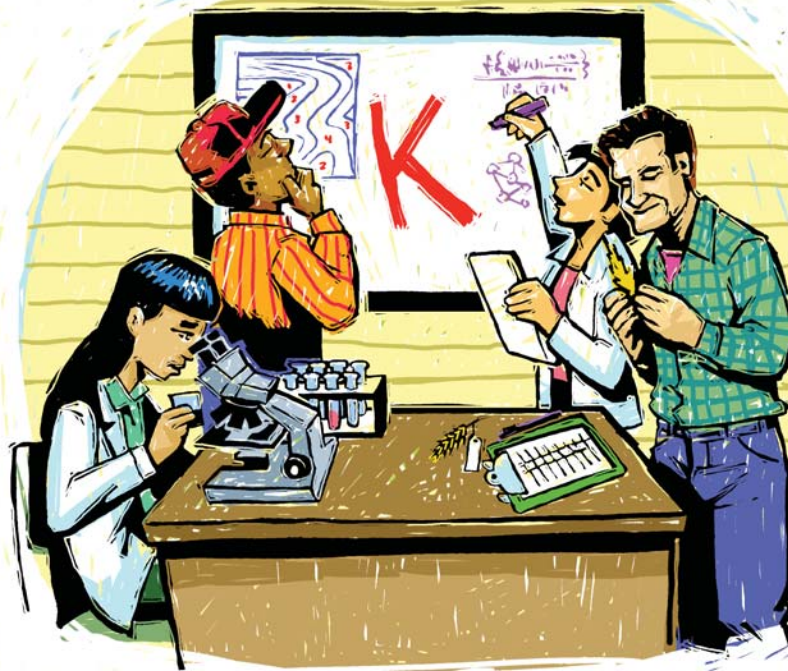


THE OVERLOOKED PLANT NUTRIENT?

It's well understood that plants require the right combination of the 14 essential mineral nutrients to sustain their growth. However, it frequently seems like just a few of the nutrients get most of the attention due to their cost or their environmental impacts. Potassium is too often overlooked as a key component in every successful farming operation.

The upcoming Frontiers of Potassium Science conference will take a close look at all aspects of potassium behavior in soils and plants, and how to improve potash fertilizer management.



Potassium is an essential mineral that is deficient in most human diets. Since potassium is not stored in the body, it must be regularly replaced by eating potassium-rich foods. Farmers often fail to account for the nutritional value of the food they produce.

Potassium is also essential for plant health and there must be a continual supply in the soil to obtain desired yields. The emphasis on agricultural intensification requires answers on how potassium management differs in diverse cropping systems and growing conditions.

When the potassium supply is limited, plants have reduced yields, poor quality, utilize water less efficiently, and are more susceptible to pest and disease damage. However, accurately predicting which soils require additional potassium and how crops will respond to added fertilizer is not simple. The selection of a particular fertilizer and where to put it for maximum efficiency is not always easy to determine. The extent of global potash resources needs to be regularly surveyed to ensure an uninterrupted supply.

Ultimately, the purpose of gathering the world-leading potassium scientists is not complete until theory gets transferred to the farmer. This conference serves as the kick-off for a comprehensive book, video presentations, regional agronomy meetings, and practical educational material that includes field-ready advice.

A closer look at potassium in agriculture is certainly overdue. I hope you will join IPNI in taking a closer look at this neglected nutrient in the years to come.

BETTER CROPS

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