

## FERTILIZER NUTRIENTS AND HUMAN NUTRITION

**It's easy to see the link between fertilizers and food production.** The world could not produce the food it needs without fertilizers. In fact, research summaries show that commercial fertilizers are responsible for at least 40 to 60% of crop yields in North America and Europe and much more in tropical areas. But at least as important is the potential for fertilizers to alleviate human nutrition problems.

**Human nutritional deficiencies are widespread.** While hunger...lack of adequate food...affects hundreds of millions, many more suffer from some kind of nutritional deficiency, which may result in stunted growth, retardation, disease, physical deformity, or even death. Society generally recognizes that fertilizers are needed to produce food, but there is often confusion or misinformation about the role, the source, and the management of nutrients that form or help build the nutritional components of the food we eat. Confusion about the similarities and differences between organic and inorganic nutrient sources is common. Many people believe that organic nutrients promote food quality, while inorganic nutrients promote only quantity...this differentiation is incorrect. High yielding and nutritious food can be and is produced with either organic or inorganic fertilizers.

**The key to producing high quantity and high quality food is adequate and balanced nutrition.** Just like people, crops need a balanced diet of essential nutrients in sufficient amounts to ensure that growth is not limited and nutrition is not compromised. Organic nutrients work well if there is access to them, but there are just not enough manure and other organic nutrient sources available to produce all the food the world needs, and these sources often do not contain enough of the essential nutrients to produce nutritious foods. Inorganic fertilizers in concert with available organic sources are the solution to most of the world's food and human nutrition problems. **Let's make sure society is aware of how essential commercial nutrients are for producing adequate and nutritious food.**



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