

**Mustard Seed Farms / David Brown**  
**Site Visit – Wednesday, September 23, 2009**

**Management Scenarios 1**

*All market indications point towards a sustained premium in the price of organically produced vegetables. David has decided to look into securing an additional 20 acres to increase his production. Assuming all of the surrounding farmland is available, either for rent or sale, what factors might influence David's decision as to which parcel to secure?*

What steps must David take in order to incorporate additional acreage without jeopardizing his organic certification?

*David does not soil test on a regular basis. He relies on chicken manure and composted yard debris to supplement his nutrients. What issues might arise over time if nutrients are applied without the benefit of soil tests? List potential concerns related to manure application and possible mitigating steps.*

*Past tests have indicated high levels of nitrates. What does this indicate? What are some possible strategies to reduce nitrate levels while still meeting the fertility needs of the farm?*

What are the economical and environmental benefits of implementing a nutrient management plan that incorporates current soil tests?

How are weeds managed in the field? How does this affect potential soil loss? How does this affect soil quality? What is your assessment of the soil health? What criteria did you use to arrive at your answer? What other ways are there to control weeds in the field that may be less aggressive towards soil quality?

*The field to the southwest of Mustard Seed Farm is used to produce conventionally grown grass seed. David has considered putting in a windbreak along the border to act as a buffer. What species might David consider? What new resource issues might be created with the establishment of a windbreak? What mitigating steps should David consider?*

David would like to make more use of cover crops. How can he do so?

What steps can David take to provide habitat for beneficial insects? Be specific.