

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

Management Scenarios 2

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?

Gophers and ground squirrels populations have noticeably increased over the past few years.
What options might David consider to control these pests?

What are the potential impacts on the local resources from the OMRI-listed pest-control materials that are used onsite?

Does this farm meet NRCS Quality Criteria for wildlife habitat? If not what steps would you suggest to help improve wildlife habitat? What are some of the negative consequences that you will need to consider?

David has purchased the 17 acres across McKay Rd. Are there any resource concerns he should be made aware of? Are there issues he should consider that may jeopardize his organic certification? What steps must David take in order to incorporate this additional acreage without jeopardizing his organic certification?

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.