

Compounds or blends for vigorous vegetables?



Craig Farlow - High value food crops agronomist

Incitec Pivot Fertilisers offers a range of high quality fertilisers to Australian vegetable growers, including the high quality Nitrophoska Special® and thousands of fertiliser blends.

The question is: which is better?

Blends

Fertiliser blends play a key role in horticulture systems. There are around 200 fertiliser blends available on Incitec Pivot Fertilisers' standard product list in the south, plus thousands more on the custom blends list. New custom blends are created every week.

Depending on the species grown, plants generally require 13 mineral nutrients from the soil.

Because most manufactured fertilisers contain only a limited number of essential nutrients, they often need to be blended to achieve the desired nutrient analysis.

Blends are available in a wide number of formulations, but guidelines must be followed to ensure physical and chemical compatibility.

As long as these stringent agronomic and blend compatibility requirements are fulfilled, custom blends are as easily accessible as conventional blends and comparably priced on a per unit basis.

For versatility, you can't go past fertiliser blends.

On the down side, fertiliser blends have a tendency towards nutrient segregation during transport or application, especially if granules of varying size and density are blended.

While the fertiliser blend may be specially developed to contain the right concentration of many different nutrients, the even application of those nutrients across the paddock may be difficult to achieve.



Compounds

Compound fertilisers allow a more uniform nutrient application because the multiple nutrients being applied are contained within each granule.

They are usually specifically developed to provide balanced nutrition that suits a particular cropping requirement or situation.

For example, in our southern horticultural crops, including potatoes, leafy greens, carrots and other row crops, Nitrophoska Special is ideal for quality nutrition and uniform delivery of nutrients.

Nitrophoska Special contains nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium (as sulphate), sulphur, calcium, magnesium and boron in every granule. The nutrients are readily plant available for rapid uptake by the crop.

The potassium in Nitrophoska Special is free from harsh chlorides, making it ideal for use on chloride sensitive crops.

The quality granules are uniformly sized and free flowing for more precise application and easy blending with other fertilisers for tailored nutrition programs.

Nitrophoska Special can be used as a planting fertiliser for vegetables, especially where soil phosphorus levels are moderate to high, or pre-plant phosphorus has been applied. It can also be used in base or side dressings.

Nitrophoska[®] Special

N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	B
12%*	5.2%	14.1%	8%	3.2%	1.2%	0.02%

*4.8% nitrate nitrogen, 7.2% ammonium nitrogen

Nitrophoska Special is also available with ENTEC[®] for growers considering adopting the latest in enhanced efficiency fertiliser technology.



ENTEC stabilises the ammonium component of the fertiliser, preventing the conversion of ammonium to nitrate in the soil for several weeks.

This keeps it protected against leaching and denitrification losses and means more nitrogen is available to support healthy crop growth.

Additionally, by encouraging 'partial ammonium nutrition', ENTEC can help improve the uptake of phosphorus, iron, zinc, manganese, sulphur, copper and silicon.

It is important for advisers to keep reviewing crop nutrition programs regularly and look for opportunities to improve.

Please consider the quality fertiliser options available and the benefits they can offer your growers, including ENTEC Nitrophoska Special. It's one of the best!

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