



Information is Key **to Restoring Soil Health With Manure**

In an age when we're drowning in information and starving for knowledge, who do you trust? More Midwestern farmers are turning to Labre Crop Consulting in Manson for their soil sampling and nutrient management needs.

"We don't sell seed, fertilizer or other crop inputs," said Brent Johnson, who incorporated Labre Crop Consulting in 2006 with his wife, LuAnn. "We're an independent soil sampling company focused on providing unbiased agronomic services for farmers."

Soil sampling, soil fertility and variable-rate technology mapping are the backbone of Labre's services. Data management is the fastest growing service at Labre, where the team handles everything from calibrating producers' precision ag equipment to writing prescriptions for variable-rate applications.

"It's all about placing the proper amount of nutrients where they are needed," said Johnson, who serves clients across Iowa, southern Minnesota and northern Missouri.

Proper soil sampling is step one. Every sample contains a 12-core minimum—a collection of 12 soil samples to produce an accurate representation of the field. "We need to understand the fertility needs of the soil first," said Johnson, who values swine manure as a source of nutrients and organic matter to boost soil health.

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-Brent Johnson, Owner, Labre Crop Consulting

Labre's specialists then work with farmers to develop a precision plan for nutrient management. They write prescriptions that control the application equipment to ensure nutrients are placed where they are needed. "I try to prove everything on my own acres first so I can have an educated conversation with my customers and help them meet their goals," said Johnson, who earned his agronomy degree from Iowa State University in 1995.

Keith Knode appreciates this attention to detail. "The Labre team is very professional and provides good advice that has helped me save money," said Knode, a Labre client who farms near Riceville.

Growing with Iowa Select Farms

Labre serves many Iowa Select Farms growers and company-owned farms. Johnson credits Iowa Select Farms with helping his company grow. "We've done business with Iowa Select Farms since we started, and they are a great partner. Having their support from the beginning allowed my wife and I to take the leap into entrepreneurship."

Johnson also values how Iowa Select Farms gives back to the community through the Deb and Jeff Hansen Foundation and helps young people get started in farming. "Livestock production is vital to Iowa's economy and offers new farmers an entry point into agriculture."

What keeps the Labre team motivated? Finding better ways to help new and experienced farmers manage nutrients to maximize yield potential while protecting the environment. "It's exciting to see how technology keeps advancing to help us reach these goals," Johnson said.

"You never get to a point where you're done improving, though. We want to keep finding new ways to grow rural Iowa's economy."



PROFILE

Labre Crop Consulting

MANSON, IOWA



Employees: 6

Iowa Select Farms has partnered with Labre Crop Consulting for 13 years. Since 2005, Iowa Select Farms has relied on Labre to independently sample and analyze the soil composition and nutrient needs of more than 200,000 acres of Iowa cropland.

