Soil Fertility and Fertilizers Professor Somsubhra Chakraborty Department of Agricultural and Food Engineering Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur Lecture 42

Fertilizer Quality Control, Fertilizer Adulteration and Fertilizer Testing (Contd.)

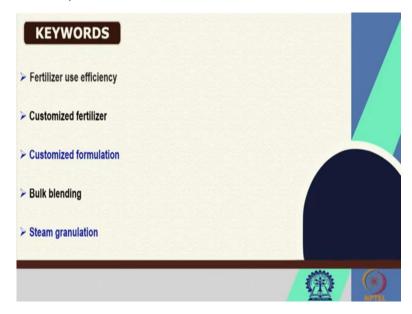
Welcome friends to this new lecture of NPTEL online certification course, soil fertility and fertilizers. We are at week 9, and in this week we are discussing fertilizer quality control, fertilizer adulteration and fertilizer testing. In our previous lecture, we have discussed about the slow release fertilizer and what are the characteristics of the slow release fertilizer? Why we require slow release fertilizer? And in this lecture we are going to cover the following concepts.

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So, the first concept we are going to cover in this lecture is objective of customized fertilizers, then characteristics or quality of customized fertilizers, then method of customized fertilizer manufacturing, then advantages of customized fertilizers, and finally, we are going to discuss some of the customized formulations available in India.

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Now, these are some of the keywords like fertilizer use efficiency, customized fertilizer, customized formulation, bulk blending, and steam granulation. So, these are we these are some of the keywords which we are going to discuss in this lecture.

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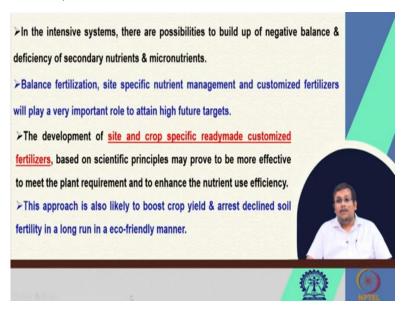
Fertilizers	Efficiency (%)
Nitrogen	40 to 50
Phosphorus	15 to 20
Potassium	50 to 70
Sulphur	8 to 12
Micronutrients	< 5

Now, if we consider the fertilizer use efficiency, you know the definition of the fertilizer use efficiency. Fertilizer use efficiency is the basically the amount of nutrients up taken by the plant, divided by the difference between the nutrient applied through fertilizer, minus the native nutrient concentration in the soil. So, if we consider the fertilizer use efficiency, these are different nutrients and the (fat) and they are and their fertilizer use efficiency you can see for nitrogen, the fertilizer use efficiency goes from 40 to 50. Sometimes it is lower than that;

sometime we can see that people are saying that there are 35 percent accuracy, fertilizer use efficiency for nitrogen.

From phosphor phosphorus, we can see the efficiency varying from 15 to 20 percent; for potassium, we can see the efficiency from 50 to 70 percent. For sulphur, we can see the efficiency varying from 8 to 12 percent. And for micronutrients, we can see the efficiency is very less that is less than 5 percent. So, these are some of the fertilizer use efficiency for different nutrients.

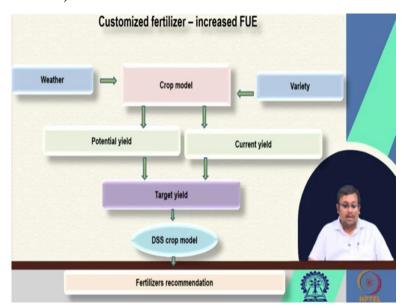
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Now, in the intensive system, there are possibilities to build up negative balance and deficiency of secondary nutrients and micronutrients. So, when there is an intensive agriculture for example, the current agricultural scenario, we can see there is a possibility is to build up the negative balance and deficiency of secondary nutrients or micronutrients. And balance fertilization, site specific nutrient management and customized fertilizer, in this condition will play a very important role to attain high future targets. Now, the development of site and crop specific readymade customized fertilizers.

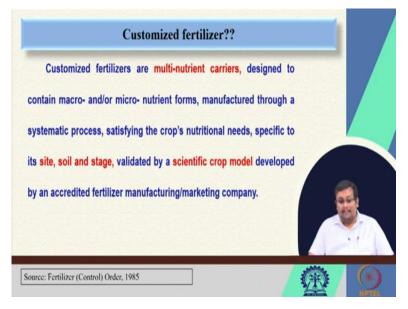
We are going to discuss these, these are site and crop specific readymade for customized fertilizer. These are based on scientific principles may prove to be more effective to meet the plant requirement, and to enhance the nutrient use efficiency. This lecture will be focusing on this customized fertilizers. Now, this approach is likely to boost crop yield and arrest declined soil fertility in a long run in a eco-friendly manner.

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Now, if we see the concept of customized fertilizer, the major goal of customized fertilizer is to increase the fertilizer use efficiency. Now, how to determine the customized fertilizer depends on several factors. First of all, we have to take care of the weather parameters, then the variety, and then we have to feed it into the crop model which will analyze the potential yield and current yield, and finalize the target yield. And then it will give the through the decision support system, we can have the fertilizer recommendation. Now, this fertilizer recommendation acts as a major major foundation for developing these customized fertilizers.

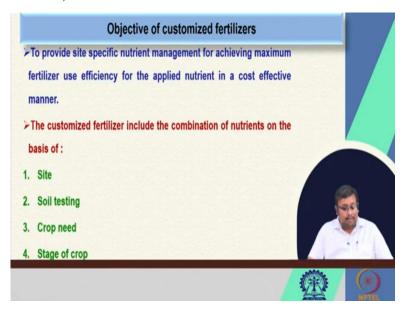
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Now, what is the definition of a customized fertilizer? Customized fertilizers are multinutrient carriers, designed to contain macro and micro nutrient forms, manufactured through a systematic process, satisfying the crops nutritional needs, specific to its site, soil and stage, validated by a scientific crop model developed by an accredited fertilizer manufacturing company. And this definition of customized fertilizer is given in fertilizer control order of 1985. So again, we can see from this definition, it is a multi-nutrient carrier. It is it has both macro and micro nutrients manufactured through a systematic process, which can satisfy the crop need.

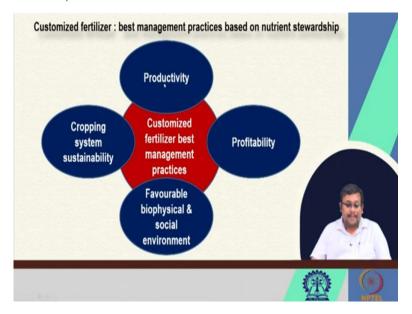
And it is very much specific to soil stage of the crop and site and it has been validated by scientific crop model which has been developed by. And this customized fertilizer is developed by accredited fertilizer manufacturing or marketing company.

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Now, if we see the objectives of customized fertilizer, we can see the major objective of customized fertilizer is to provide site specific nutrient management for achieving maximum fertilizer use efficiency for the applied nutrient in a cost effective manner; so, it is very much site specific. And the customized fertilizer generally include the combination of nutrients on the basis of site, soil testing, crop need, and stage of crop.

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So, if we can see the best management practices based on nutrient stewardship as far as the customized fertilizer are concerned, customized fertilizers are concerned; we can see that customized fertilizer best management practices depends on four major factors. What are the factors? Productivity, then profitability, then favourable biophysical and social environment, and cropping system sustainability; so, these four are the major foundations of customized fertilizer management.

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Now, if we see the characteristics or quality of customized fertilizer, these are some of the features as per the fertilizer control order of 1985. First of all, it has to be granular in size. And it has to be granular and minimum 90 percent should be between 1 to 4 millimeter and

below 1 millimeter should not exceed 5 percent of it. And it should have 100 percent water soluble grade; so, the customized fertilizer should be 100 percent water soluble. And minimum nutrient content in specific grade should contain more than 30 units of all nutrients; so these are some of the important characteristics of customized fertilizers.

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Now, the next question comes to our mind, why we need customized fertilizer? Because we can see nowadays as a result of intensive agriculture, we can see imbalanced use of fertilizers and then we can see continuous increase of secondary and micronutrient deficiency. We can also see stagnation of crop productivity, emergence of multiple fertilizer responsive genotypes, increasing the fertilizer use. So, one of the major reason for cutler, customized fertilizer development is there is an imbalanced use of fertilizer in intensive agriculture. So, we need to develop and customized fertilizers specific to the need of the crop; secondly, continuous increase of secondary and micronutrient deficiency.

So, we can see for last couple of decades, we can see the number of deficient fertilizer elements is increasing and as a result, we have to use this customized fertilizer. We cannot only rely on this NPK anymore. Second, third is stagnation of crop productivity; we can see that there is a stagnation of crop productivity, it is not increasing. So to increase it, we have to take a holistic measurement and customized fertilizer is one of them; then, emergence of multi-fertilizer responsive genotypes. So, nowadays genotypes have been developed which are responsive to multiple fertilizers.

So, that is why we need the customized fertilizer. Then, we need to increase the fertilizer use efficiency, we need to increase or improve the soil health, then we need to reduce the

fertilizer based input cost by applying a customized fertilizer. And finally, but not the least, that is environmental pollution. So, judicious application of fertilizer in the soil can reduce the environmental pollution.

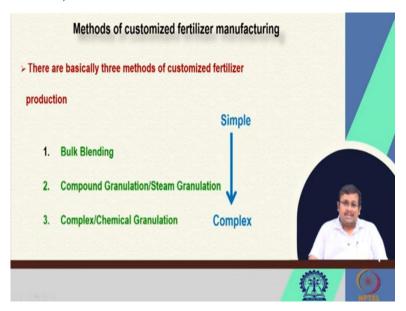
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Now, the next question comes to our mind why farmers prefer customized fertilizers. There are several reasons. First of all, the better crop quality and productivity. Because, when you apply the customized fertilizer based on the need for the local crop and the particular site, it can improve the crop quality as well as the crop productivity. It can also maximize the nutrient use efficiency and these customized fertilizers are specific to crop an area based on soil fertility. It, they are available in ready to use form in balanced way, and they can improve soil fertility.

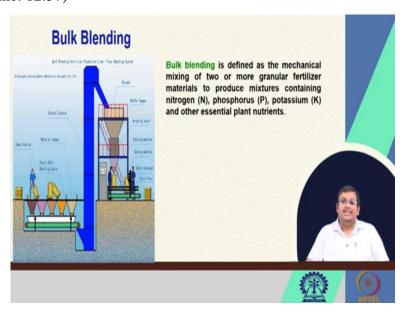
They are environmental friendly, and they can be adapted to various field application. So, these are the reason for which farmers generally prefer customized fertilizers.

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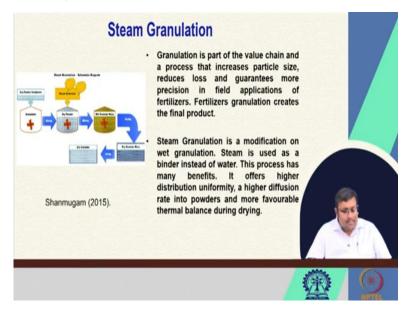
Now, what are the methods of customized fertilizer manufacturing? There are basically three methods of customized fertilizer production. First of all, bulk blending, second is compound granulation or steam granulation and third one is complex or chemical granulation. Generally, bulk blending is the simplest process and complex or chemical granulation is the complex process. So, as we move from the bulk blending to compound granulation or steam granulation to complex or chemical granulation, the complexity of the processes process increased.

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Now, what is bulk blending? Bulk blending is defined as the mechanical mixing of two or more granular fertilizer materials to produce mixtures containing nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and other essential plant nutrients. So, this is called the bulk blending. In the bulk bending, what we are doing? We are basically mixing two or more granular fertilizer materials to produce mixtures containing nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and other essential plant nutrients.

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Then, steam granulation is another process. Now, what is granulation? Granulation is a part of the value chain and a process that increases the particle size, reduces loss and grand guarantees more precision in field application of fertilizers. So basically, here we can increase the particle size, we can reduce the loss (fat) fertilizer loss and guarantee more precision in the field application of the fertilizer of fertilizers granulation create the final product. Now, steam granulation is a modification on wet granulation, and steam is used as a binder instead of water.

And this process has many benefits. It offers higher distribution uniformity, a higher diffusion rate into powders, and more favourable thermal balance during the drying. So, what happens in case of thermal granulation? Here steam we use as a binding material instead of water. Now, this process of same granulation as many benefits last, just like it offers higher distribution, uniform distribution, then higher diffusion rate into the powder, and more favourable thermal balance during the drying process.

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Now, what are the advantages of customized fertilizers? First of all, customized fertilizer ensure best fertilizers management practices and are generally assumed to maximize the crop yield, while minimizing unwanted impacts on the environment and human health. So basically, the crux of the the advantages of customized fertilizer is, it increases the crop yield while minimizing the unwanted impacts on the environment and human health. Secondly, application of customized fertilizer is compatible with existing farmers system and hence it is generally comfortably accepted by the farmers.

And thirdly customized fertilizer satisfies crops, nutritional demand and specific to area, soil and growth stage of the plant. So, these are the major benefits of customized fertilizers.

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Apart from that, as the micronutrients is also added with the granulated NPK fertilizer, the plants can absorb the micro-nutrient along with macro-nutrient which prevents nutrient deficiency in plant. Remember that micro-nutrient with the mixed fertilizer is one of the most convenient methods of fertilizer application, and helps in more uniform distribution of nutrients with conventional application equipments.

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Now, how we can decide the best customized fertilizer? Which one is the best customized fertilizer? Or what are the steps of deciding which, which is the best customized fertilizer? First of all, we have to geo-reference the selected area. Second is we have to select the sampling points using appropriate statistical procedure. Thirdly, we have to do the actual sampling of sites. After the sampling, we have to analyze the soil plant and water samples for nutrients and some soil characteristics. We have to then define the management zones; then yield targeting needs to be done in major management zone.

Then, we have to compute the crop removal of the nutrients, then we have to calculate the nutrient requirement. And finally based on the nutrient requirement will blend nutrient based on generated information. So, this is how we can derive the best customized fertilizer.

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2005	Concept paper in Indian Journal Fertilizers & presented in FAI seminar
2006	FAI working Group
2007	FAI & DAC proposal on CF
2007	CF formulation & field validation trial by Tata, Nagarajuna & Deepak
2007	Series of CF workshops conducted
2008	CF guideline issued by GoI on 11th March, 2008
2008	DAC approved 12 CF grades
2009	Tata initiates setting up of hi-tech CF plant
2010	Gol support for availability of raw material
2010	Tata's CF Plant starts production on 22nd Nov., 2010

Now, what is the journey of customized fertilizer in India? So, in 2005, the Concept paper in Indian Journal for Fertilizers and, and this Concept paper first appeared in Indian Journal fertilizer and it was presented in Fertilizer Association of India seminar. In 2006, FAI working group was developed and then in 2007, FAI and Department of Agriculture and Cooperation proposal on this customized fertilizer first surfaced. And then in 2007, the customized fertilizer formulation and field validation trial in it was executed by Tata, Nagarjuna and Deepak fertilizers.

Then in 2007, series of customized fertilizer workshop conducted. And then to the in 2008, the customized fertilizer guidelines guideline issued by government of India in the on 11th March. Then, in 2008, DAC approves 12 customized fertilizer grades; 2009, Tata initiate setting up the high tech customized fertilizer plant. And in 2010, Government of India support for availability of raw material and then in 2010, Tata's consumer's fertilizer plant started starts production on 22nd of November 2010. So, this is how the history of customized fertilizer in India.

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Now, customized formulations in India. So, first for Fertilizer Control Order approved about 36 formulation of customized fertilizers so far. At present nearly 1 lakh tonne of customized fertilizer is being marketed by top four companies of India. Who are the important? Now, the question comes who are the important companies in the market, who produce the customized fertilizers? So, Nagarjuna fertilizer is one of them, Tata Chemicals, then Indo Gulf, then Coromandel Fertilizers Limited, and Deepak fertilizers. So, these are the major players of customized fertilizers in India.

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Now, let us see some examples of customized fertilizer. So, there is NPKZnS that is top 14, 27, 10, 4, 0.5. So, this is a customized fertilizer; it is used for Paddy in eastern Andhra

Pradesh, which is manufactured by Nagarjuna Fertilizers. Then, NPKZnSB is ZnSB, so, we have zinc (sulf) sulphide and boron. So, we have 20, 0, 15, 0, 0.2 So, we can see 20 percent nitrogen, 15 percent K2O. And then we have 0.2 percent of boron for Paddy and Maize in middle Andhra Pradesh, which is produced by the Coromandel Fertilizer Limited.

So, these fertilizer manufacturing basically involves the mixing and crushing of urea, the diammonium phosphate, Muriate of Potash, zinc sulphide, and bentonite sulphur, and boron granules, for obtaining the desired proportion of NPK, sulphur and other micro-nutrients. So, these are some examples of customized fertilizers.

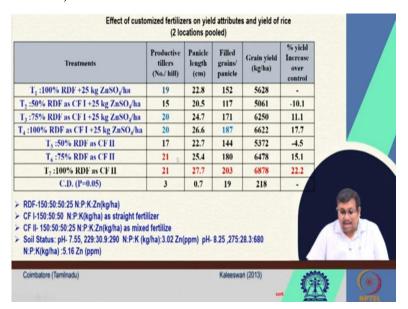
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So, let us see what are the different customized fertilizer formulations, which are available in India. So, if you can see the wheat, so these are the formulations like 10, 18, 25, 3, 5; so,

these are available for these geographical area. Then sugarcane, we have 7, 20, 18, 6, 0.5, 0 which are available in Moradabad, KR Nagar, Farukhabad. So, similarly for rice, groundnut, maize, potato, and for paddy, mentha, (soup) grapes, sugarcane, paddy and then maize, and basal groundnut; so, all these are having their own formulations. And there is restricted geographical areas, where these are, these customized fertilizers are useful.

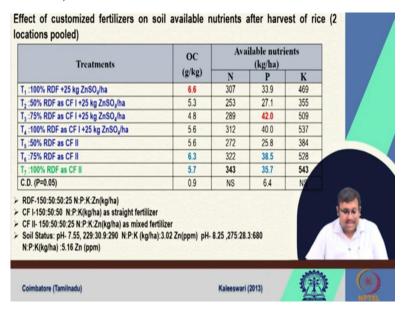
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Now, let us see effect of customized fertilizer on yield attributes and yield of rice. So, we can see here two locations pooled; so, if we consider that these T7 that is 100 percent of recommended dose of fertilizer plus customized fertilizer; we can see the number of productive tillers per hill increased as compared to the the only the recommended dose of fertilizers. And then we can see that panicle length is also increased, filled grains per panicle also increased as compared to the other treatments. Grain yield, you can see highest grain yield you can see here in case of this combined recommended dose of fertilizers, plus a customized fertilizer.

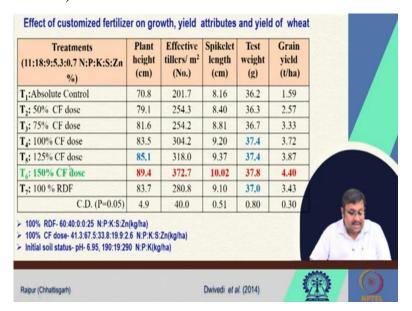
So, we can see that around 22 percent increase in yield over the control. So, this is an example of effect of customized fertilizer on yield of rice.

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So, this is again effective customized fertilizer on, on soil; available nutrients after harvest of rice. You can see in this T7, which can which has 100 percent RDF as CF two, which is basically 100, 50, 50, 25; that is NPK zinc as mixed fertilizers. So, we can see that when we are using these, we are getting the highest organic carbon of 5.7 kg gram per kg and we are getting the highest nitrogen of 343 kg per hectare. We are getting the almost high very very high available phosphate; that is that 35.7. And potash that is highest 543 kg per hector. So, you can see these are the benefits of using the customized fertilizers.

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Also, you can see effect of customized fertilizer on growth, yield attributes, and yield of wheat. You can see that when we are using the customized for 150 percent of the customized

fertilizer dose, we are getting the plant height that is 89.4 centimeters; so, the highest height we are getting. Then, effective tillers, we are getting highest that is 372.7 tillers per square meter and then spikelet length also is the highest in case of the customized fertilizer, plus RDF. And then test weight is also highest among all the treatments and then grain yield. We can see it is also highest in case of combined RDF. You know customized fertilizer dose 150 percent of the customized fertilizer dose.

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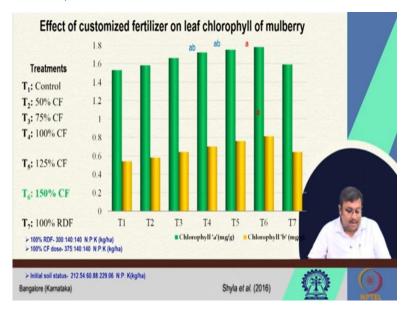
We can see here effect of customized fertilizer on yield attributes and yield of onion. So, we can see that when there is an 100 percent customized fertilizer dose in three equal split, we can get the plant height of highest plant height that is 57.7 centimeter. And we can have the highest yield 22.3 tonne per hectare and then we are getting the fertilizer use efficiency that is 22.2. So, also when we are using this 100 percent of customized fertilizer in two equal split, we can get the green leaves of; we can get the green leaves highest green leaves of 13 tonne per hectare. So, you can see these are the benefits of application of customized fertilizers.

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Treatment	Available nutrients (kg/ha)			ppm
	N	P	K	Zn
1: 50% RD of CF	220.0	15.35	411.22	0.18
T ₂ : 75% RD of CF	222.5	16.07	418.64	0.20
T ₃ : 100% RD of CF	229.5	17.78	421.69	0.35
T ₄ : 125% RD of CF	249.0	20.36	432.73	0.50
T ₅ : 150% RD of CF	273.0	23.20	448.63	0.58
T ₆ : 100% RDF	225.0	18.18	439.03	0.29
Control	198.5	10.98	355.19	0.12
CD (P = 0.05)	13.8	2.13	NS	0.09
				47.750

Also, we can see effect of customized fertilizer on soil available nutrients after harvest of soybean. We can see here that when we are using the customized fertilizer, we are getting the highest available nutrients.

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This slide shows the effect of customized fertilizer on leaf chlorophyll of mulberry, and you can clearly see that when we are using the customized fertilizer that can increase the the chlorophyll content leaf, chlorophyll content of mulberry and you can see the differences.

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So guys, this makes the end of this lecture number 42. I hope we have learned about these customized fertilizer and their benefits. And these are the references for this lecture. Let us wrap up this lecture and let us meet in our next lecture to discuss more about the fertilizer control and fertilizer quality. Thank you.