

VITEC Fish Fertiliser for vineyards

Key points to healthier vines - naturally

Grapegrowers are showing increased interest in the use of natural fertiliser products, particularly fish and seaweed fertilisers. However, VITEC, suppliers of high quality fish and kelp products, warns growers to ensure that the fertiliser is made from pure product and not be fooled by high nutrient analysis. High levels of NPK generally indicate added chemicals, while the responses from fish and kelp appear to have little to do with the NPK analysis.

VITEC Fertilisers produce three fish and kelp products - VITEC Fish Fertiliser, King Kelp and VITEC Combo (fish and kelp). These are all produced in a gentle process aimed at retaining maximum levels of sensitive nutritional factors. No heat, no added water, no added growth promotants, no chemical fertilisers and no agricultural chemicals are added.

With eight years of research, process development and field experience, VITEC Fertilisers has demonstrated the benefits of gentle processing and strategic application of pure fish and pure kelp.

Short term experiments on a large range of crops have demonstrated increased yields, improved resistance to pests and disease, and quick recovery from stress induced by drought, flood and other causes.

The reasons put forward by scientists for the responses which far exceeded that expected from the chemical analysis included:

- The complete range of minor elements found in fish and kelp.
- The presence of a wide range of complex organic compounds including amino acids, oils, vitamins and in the case of kelp, complex carbohydrates and growth regulatory substances.

The modes of action are presumed to be several:

- Direct stimulation of soil biological activity when applied to the soil, sometimes evidenced by the appearance of visual mycelial growths or the presence of large numbers of earthworms on the soil surface.

- Indirect stimulation of soil biological activity brought about by translocation of the stimulating factors from foliar applications to the roots. The root hairs respond by increasing root exudates which in turn stimulate adjacent micro-organisms to release major nutrients to the plant.
- The promotion of bacterial blooms on the surface of plants. Many bacteria suppress the establishment of surface infecting fungi such as the mildews.
- Amino acids from fish or alginates and other carbohydrates from kelp provide frost resistance by lowering the freezing point of plant tissue.

Past trials also strongly indicate that very small amounts of fish and kelp should be used for foliar applications. Sprays should be at high dilutions. Responses are gradual and cumulative, and timing of application is important. Fish and kelp used in combination appear to have a synergistic effect that gives superior results to either fish or kelp used on their own, especially on poor, sandy or degraded soils.

Obviously, a big part of getting good results from fish and kelp is to withdraw or reduce the use of chemicals and practices which adversely affect the biological health of the soil.

The use of VITEC Fish Fertiliser for vineyards

A responsible fertiliser programme requires careful consideration of all available information including soil and leaf analysis, previous fertiliser history, type of farming, soil type and rainfall patterns.

It is therefore not possible to give figures that will suit all locations and farming systems. However, examples can be given as to how practical farmers have obtained excellent results by using different application rates and timing to suit their farming practices.

VITEC Fish can be applied to the foliage and/or to the soil. Please feel free to talk to us to verify your preferred option.



Foliar applications

Option 1: Supplementary to a fertiliser programme already in progress

Where there is plenty of soil activity, earthworm and microbial action, and where insect pests are not a problem:

- 2-3 litres per hectare at 2 to 4 week intervals, applying a total of 12-24 litres per hectare per annum. Smaller amounts more often is better.

Option 2: VITEC Fish used as a main fertiliser and for general vine health

- 6-8 litres per hectare. Apply at 3 to 4 week intervals. Applying a total of 30-60 litres per hectare per annum plus a soil application is advisable.

Option 3:

Where considerable growing difficulties are being experienced such as poor vigour, low fruit set, fungal disease, insect pests or other forms of stress such as poor drainage or where drought conditions occur:

- Apply a combination of 7 litres VITEC Fish plus 3 litres VITEC King Kelp per hectare at 3-4 week intervals, or VITEC Combo at rate of 2-5 litres/HA in 600-2000 litres of water. Apply as a fine spray.

Soil applications

Option 1: A maintenance programme

The rates shown can be applied with most weedicides. At this rate, it should be possible to reduce other ground applied fertilisers by at least 50%.

- 15 litres per hectare applied 3-4 times per annum.

VITEC

Can you afford not to use it?