

FERTILIZING PONDS TO INCREASE FISH PRODUCTION

Adding commercial fertilizer to a pond will increase the poundage of fish that can be harvested from it each year.

Fertilizer promotes the growth of microscopic plants necessary for the production of small water animals on which small fish feed. The abundance of these plants and animals is indicated by the degree of green or brownish color they give to the water. This is the best and cheapest method of controlling unwanted waterweeds. Once a planned fertilization program is started it should be continued or waterweeds will become a problem.

Advantages of a planned fertilizing program:

1. Increases fish production.
2. Prevents invasion of undesirable waterweeds.
3. Makes fish harvesting easier.

Ponds to be fertilized should have the following characteristics:

1. Pond does not have an established stand of waterweeds.
2. Water does not have excessive muddiness.
3. Livestock are not allowed to wade in water.
4. The side slopes are 3:1 or steeper.
5. The pond has little or no water less than three feet deep.
6. No constant flow-through of water.
7. Water has a pH range between 6.5 and 8.3.
8. The watershed has adequate erosion control cover to prevent erosion and siltation.

Kind and amount of fertilizer:

1. A chemical fertilizer containing equal parts of nitrogen and phosphorus.
2. 100 pounds of 8-8-2 or equivalent should be applied per surface acre.

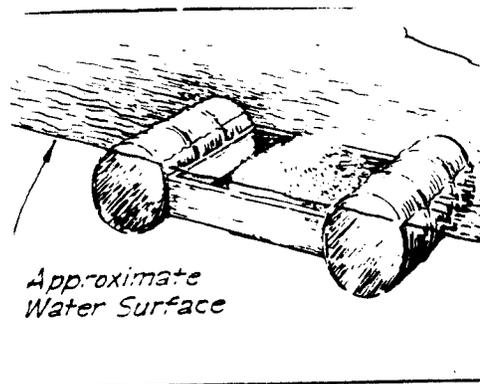
When to apply:

1. Make first application about April 5.
2. Make an application every two weeks until water turns a greenish color or when a bright object on the end of a stick disappears at a 12" depth.
3. Check pond every two weeks for intensity of color. Make an application when the water has cleared so that a bright object can be seen at 18" depth.
4. Discontinue application about October 15 or about the time of the first frost.

How to apply:

An effective time and labor saving method of fertilizer application is with a floating fertilizer platform. Illustrated by diagram at right.

One platform placed on the windward side of a pond is adequate for a pond up to 15 surface acres.



Your pond has _____ acre surface area. _____ pounds of 8-8-2 fertilizer (or equivalent) is required per application. Refer to F.B. 2250 "Warm Water Fishponds" for additional information on fishpond management.