



Soil Test Questions; Bone Meal vs. Rock Phosphate

Posted by [Philip Hopkins](#)

[Forum List](#) [Message List](#) [New Topic](#)

[Philip Hopkins](#)

[Soil Test Questions; Bone Meal vs. Rock Phosphate](#)

February 03, 2018 07:11PM

Registered: 6 years ago

Posts: 8

My soil test showed low Phosphorus and the recommendation was for 90#/acre additional phosphate.

Given that price is essentially equal is there any advantage of Tennessee Brown Rock Phosphate vs. Bone meal. Bone meal has a little nitrogen, but I'll be applying Blood meal as my nitrogen source.

The only advantage I can think of is that I need less weight for the Bone Meal, which is fewer pounds that I have to tote up that hill.

The Boron level, for which they don't list a sufficient level, tested 1#/acre, 1.1, and 1.6 respectively at three separate orchards. I vaguely remember that 0.5 is considered adequate for most fruit trees, but I'm not sure. I haven't added Boron in the 6 years I've been growing.

The calcium/magnesium ratios were 3.5 (apples), 10.8 (apples), and 15 (pears). The soil is a clay-loam with a reasonable amount of organic matter. Should I adjust this ratio for any of these?

Thanks,
Philip Hopkins

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 02/03/2018 07:25PM by Philip Hopkins.

[Reply Quote](#)

[Paul Weir](#)

[Re: Soil Test Questions; Bone Meal vs. Rock Phosphate](#)

March 02, 2018 10:42PM

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 187

Hi Philip,

What was the pH of the soil sample? You might consider posting a link to see your entire soil test for viewing by the members too -- might help get some additional insight

Bone Meal is going to be a higher & faster Phosphorus availability than Rock Phosphate will. If you need faster results, the bone meal will be an advantage, but don't forget that the microbes are what unlock the phosphorus for your trees in the long term and the rock phosphate will be a good addition to the soil mix too. . . slow & steady always wins the race :-)

For Boron, my goal is to have my soil test results return a value of 1.0 to 1.6ppm of Boron. I am working to gently increase it in my orchards as well. If you are at 1.1ppm to 1.6ppm, you are probably just fine. But Boron scores don't always correspond with available Boron, so you might consider doing a pre-bloom Boron Spray of the trees only as a boost and if you have enough trees -- spray 1/2 with the Boron pre-bloom spray and the other half without . . . please report back what you find. . . also Boron availability is often tied to organic matter content. If you don't have an Organic Matter score of 5% or higher, work on that too as it will help with your future Boron sink as well as a multitude of other nutrient and biological benefits.

Here is a link to a very good write up on Boron in Soils from the University of Wisconsin
www.soils.wisc.edu/extension/pubs/A2522.pdf

Good luck!

[Gopher Hill Apples](#)

Zone 8 in California

[Reply Quote](#)

[Newer Topic](#) [Older Topic](#)

[Print View](#) [RSS](#)

Sorry, only registered users may post in this forum.

[Click here to login](#)

