

Four Years of Hog and Cattle Manure Application in East-Central Saskatchewan: Impact on Soil and Crop Performance

S.P. Mooleki¹, J.J. Schoenau¹, G. Wen, J.L. Charles, and G. Hultgreen²

¹Department of Soil Science

University of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, SK S7N 5A8

²Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute

Humboldt, SK

mooleki@sask.usask.ca

Abstract

A study was initiated in the fall of 1996 in east-central Saskatchewan to examine the soil and crop response to application of liquid hog manure and solid feedlot cattle manure at different rates, timing and methods of application. Low, medium and high rates of manure (equivalent to 100, 200 and 400 kg total N/ha, respectively) and of urea (50, 100 and 200 kg N/ha, respectively) were applied in various timing combinations. Field crops (canola, spring wheat, hulless barley and canola) were seeded in spring of 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively. This paper only looks at the effect of rates of liquid swine manure and solid cattle manure in comparison to rates of urea. Results show significant crop response to rates of both hog and cattle manure. Effect of hog manure on grain yield was higher than that of cattle manure and comparable to that of urea. Annual application of the medium and high rates of hog manure resulted in grain yields similar to those at the low rate. However, annual application of the high rate of hog manure resulted in significant elevation of available N in both the upper (0-60 cm) and the lower (60-120 cm) soil depths. A single application of either hog or cattle manure at the beginning of the study showed no residual effect on either crop or soil by the third year. Cumulative N use efficiency (NUE) of swine manure was lower but comparable to that of urea at the corresponding rates of application.

Introduction

The expansion of the livestock industry, the need to utilize the manure in an environmentally friendly and economically viable manner, and the desire to minimize the use of chemical N fertilizers have rekindled interest in the use of livestock manure as a fertilizer. This report is part of an on-going study initiated in 1996 to examine the soil and crop response to application of liquid swine manure and solid feedlot cattle manure at different rates and methods of application. Furthermore, the study seeks to evaluate nutrient forms and amounts in the manure and the effect of rate and method of manure application on soil fertility, nutrient utilization and crop yield. This paper puts together and summarises the results of crop response to annual application of the two types of manure compared to that of urea fertilizer observed over the past four years, 1997 to 2000.

Materials and methods

Two sites were selected in the fall of 1996 in the Black soil zone near Humboldt, Saskatchewan. Various treatment combinations were used for both the swine and cattle manure experiments to cover a period of four years (Table 1). Quantities of manure-N application for the 1997 to 2000 growing seasons are given in Table 2. Both manure and urea fertilizer applications were made in the preceding fall of each growing season, respectively. Urea fertilizer application rates were 50, 100 and 200 kg N ha⁻¹ for the low, medium and high treatment levels, respectively.

Table 1. Manure and Fertilizer Application Regimes for the 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 growing seasons at Burr and Dixon

Swine manure					Cattle manure						
Trt	'97	'98	'99	'00	Trt	'97	'98	'99	'00		
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	No injection	Check with incorporation
2	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	Injection pass @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
3	1	0	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
4	1	1	1	1	4	2	0	0	2	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
5	2	0	0	2	5	2	0	2	2	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
6	2	0	2	2	6	2	2	2	2	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
7	2	2	2	2	7	4	0	0	4	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
8	4	0	0	4	8	4	4	4	4	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/incorporated
9	4	4	4	4	9	1	1	1	1	Swine Injection @ 12"	Cattle Broadcast/delayed-incorp.
10	1	1	1	1	10	1	1	1	1	Swine Sweep @ 24"	Urea Banded
11	1	1	1	1	11	2	2	2	2	Swine Spiked & straight boot	Urea Banded
12	1	1	1	1	12	4	4	4	4	Swine Broadcast & incorporated	Urea Banded
13	1	1	1	1						Urea Banded	
14	2	2	2	2						Urea Banded	
15	4	4	4	4						Urea Banded	

Key: 1 Low
2 Medium
4 High

Table 2. Total N Applied in the Swine and Cattle Manure studies at the Low, Medium and High Application Rates in the 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 growing seasons at Burr and Dixon

Code	Swine manure								Cattle manure								
	1997		1998		1999		2000		1997		1998		1999		2000		
	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	
	----- (kg N ha ⁻¹) -----																
Check	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Low	1	204	74	46	51	142	97	97	94	228	121	104	104	74	69	113	113
Medium	2	395	147	92	102	285	195	194	188	456	242	208	208	149	138	226	226
High	4	790	295	183	204	569	390	388	376	912	484	416	416	298	276	452	452

Results

In all the four growing seasons, pre-seeding available N in the 0 – 60 cm soil profile was significantly elevated by increasing swine manure and urea application rates (Fig. 1). Generally, pre-seeding available N in plots treated with the low, medium and high rates of swine manure was comparable to those receiving corresponding rates of urea. The only exception was in 1998 at Dixon and 1999 at Burr when pre-seeding available N at the high rate of manure remained the same as that at the medium rate. Very little evidence of cumulative effect of swine manure and urea were observed at the low and medium rates on pre-seeding available N at both locations. On the other hand, cumulative effect of high rates of both swine manure and urea on pre-seeding available N were observed in the third and fourth year at Dixon but not at Burr.

At the Dixon site, cattle manure had no significant effect on pre-seeding available N in the 0 – 60 cm soil profile (Fig. 2) in all the four growing seasons. However, although no elevation in pre-seeding available N was observed in 1997 at Dixon, increasing rates of cattle manure

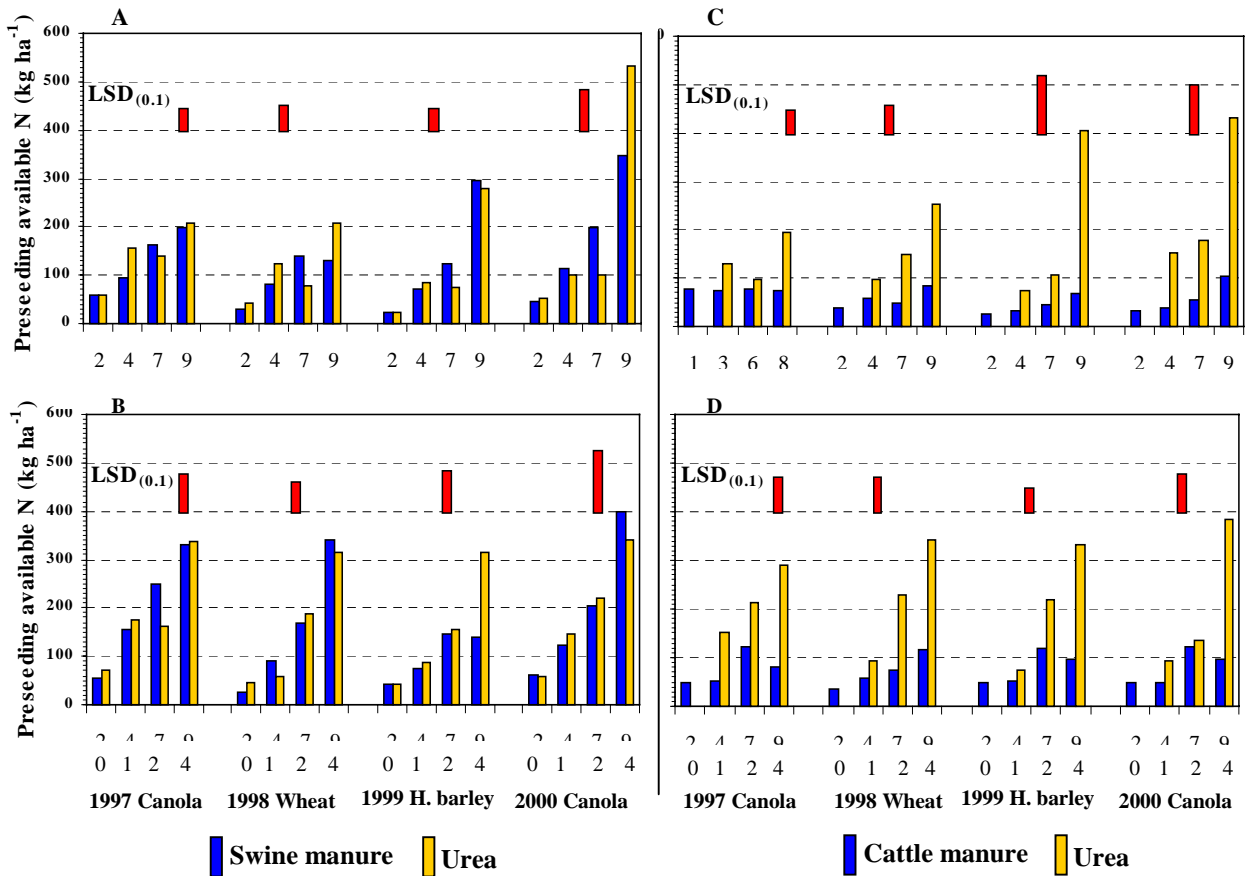


Fig. 1. Pre-seeding available N in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively, in the swine manure study at Dixon (A) and Burr (B), and in the cattle manure study at Dixon (C) and Burr (D).

increased pre-seeding available N in subsequent years although these increments were not statistically significant. Similar results were obtained at Burr, except that elevation of pre-seeding available N was evident even in 1997. Compared to cattle manure, urea enhanced pre-seeding available N two to three fold at the corresponding application rates at both locations. As in the swine manure experiment, evidence of cumulative effect of urea on pre-seeding available N was observed at Dixon but not at Burr.

Increasing rates of swine and cattle manure significantly enhanced crop N uptake in all the four crops (Fig. 2). At both Dixon and Burr, crop N uptake in swine manure treated plots tended to be comparable to that in urea treated plots. At Dixon, crop N uptake in urea treated plots was higher than cattle manure treated plots. However, at Burr, no significant difference in crop N uptake was observed in all the four growing seasons between cattle manure and urea treated plots.

No significant differences in grain yield were observed between swine manure and urea treated plots or between cattle manure and urea treated plots in all the crops over the four growing seasons (Fig. 3). However, particularly at Burr, both swine and cattle manure tended to exhibit higher grain yields than urea. In all the four crops, the effect of increasing swine manure on grain protein concentration was the same as that due to increasing rates of urea fertilizer (Table 3). In both cases, grain protein was significantly enhanced by increasing the rate of application. At Dixon, cattle manure did not have a significant effect on grain protein in all the crops except hulless barley in 1999. On the other hand, urea enhanced grain protein in all the crops. At Burr, the effect of increasing cattle manure rate on grain protein was similar to that of urea in all crops except wheat in 1998.

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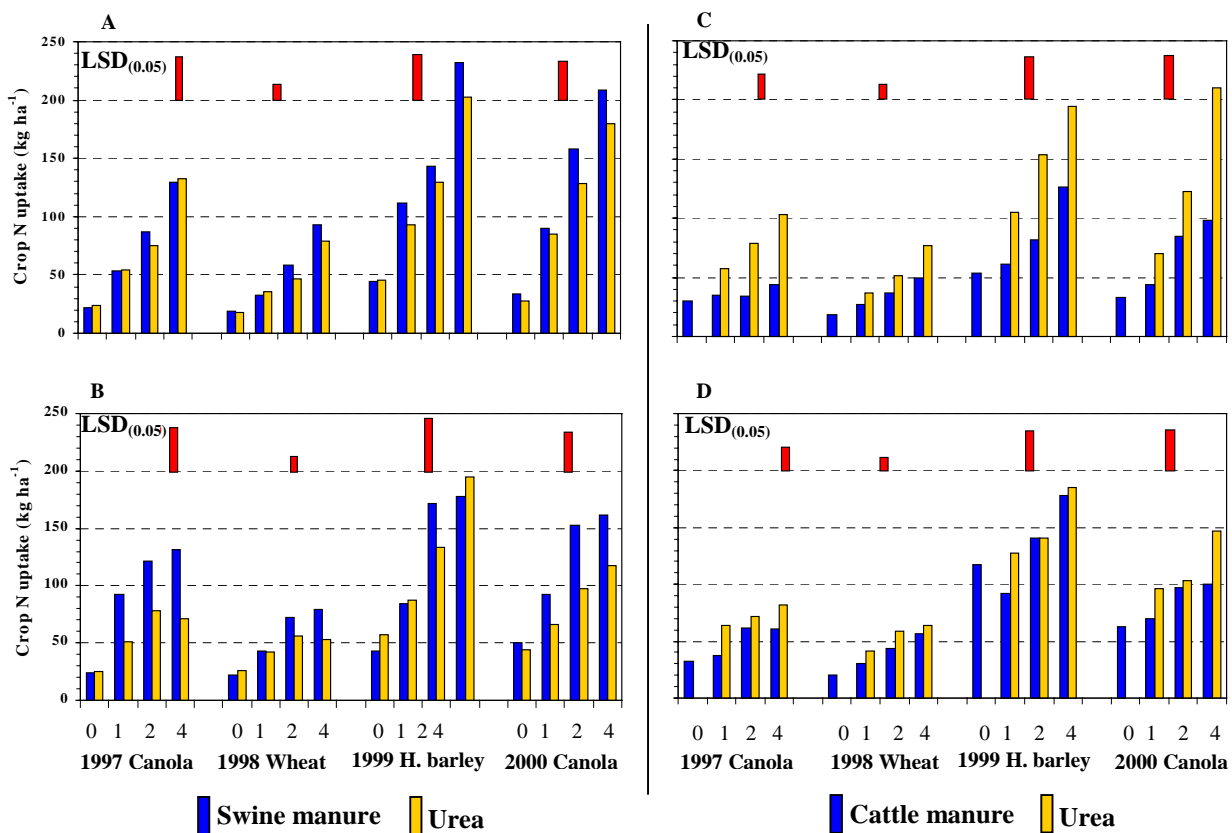


Fig. 2. Nitrogen uptake of canola, wheat, hulless barley and canola in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively, in the swine manure study at Dixon (A) and Burr (B), and in the cattle manure study at Dixon (C) and Burr (D).

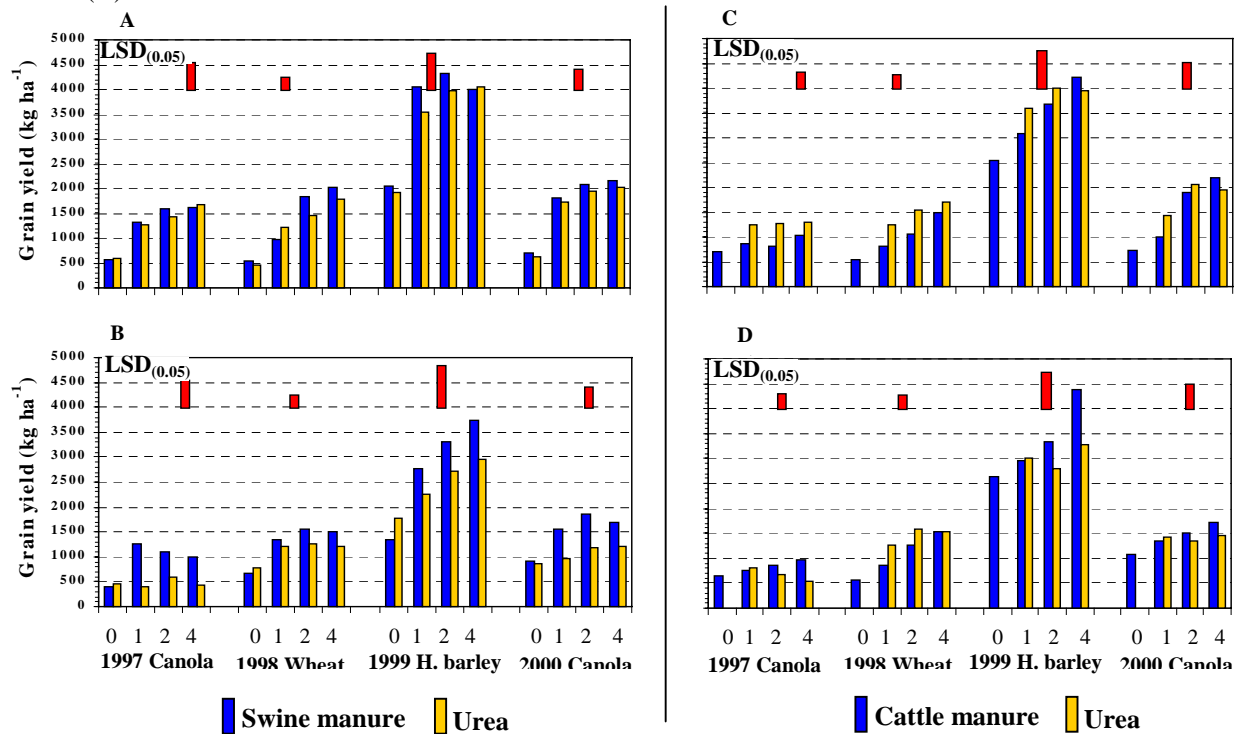


Fig. 3. Grain yield of canola, wheat, hulless barley and canola in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively, in the swine manure study at Dixon (A) and Burr (B), and in the cattle manure study at Dixon (C) and Burr (D).

Cumulative N use efficiency (NUE) adjusted for straw N of the previous crop in swine manure treated plots was lower but comparable to that of urea at the corresponding rates of application. At Dixon, significantly lower cumulative NUE of swine manure was observed for canola in both 1997 and 2000. At Burr, significantly lower cumulative NUE of swine manure was observed only for canola in 1997. In contrast, NUE of cattle manure was by far lower than that of the corresponding rates of urea. However, at Dixon, there was a general trend of improving NUE over the four years.

Discussion

Results of this study show that both swine and cattle manure are viable alternatives to chemical N fertilizers. Most of the N present in swine manure is in inorganic form and therefore, readily available to the subsequent crop (Schoenau *et al*, 2000) as indicated by pre-seeding available N. However, due to a high C:N ratio of cattle manure, pre-seeding available N was not elevated to the same extent as that due to swine manure or urea fertilizer. Notwithstanding, crop N uptake and grain yield in cattle manure treated plots were comparable to those under urea and swine manure treatment. This aspect was more evident at the Burr site, indicating the capacity of cattle manure to enhance soil productivity of marginal soils. These results show that, although pre-seeding available N was not significantly enhanced in treatments receiving cattle manure, sufficient N slowly became available to the crop, through mineralization, resulting in increased grain yield and total N uptake at both locations. The similarity in crop N uptake between swine manure and urea were also demonstrated in a green house study by Qian and Schoenau (2000), who attributed this to the presence of other nutrients in the manure that may enhance root growth and N uptake. Generally, grain yield on swine manure treated plots were higher than that on urea treated plots. These results are in agreement with Stevenson *et al*. (1998) and Cavers (1999), who observed that grain yield and grain protein responses to manure are comparable to responses from commercial fertilizers.

Table 3. Grain protein of canola, wheat, hulless barley and canola in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively, in the swine manure study (A) and in the cattle manure study (B) at Burr and Dixon

A													
GRAIN PROTEIN (%)													
Trt	Source	Rate				1997 Canola		1998 Wheat		1999 H.barley		2000 Canola	
		'97	'98	'99	'00	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon
2	Check	0	0	0	0	26.3 bc	19.6 c	14.7 c	16.2 b	10.5 d	8.9 d	24.7 b	22.1 d
4	Swine	1	1	1	1	30.7 a	20.4 c	14.8 c	15.2 bc	11.5 d	10.4 c	25.4 b	21.3 de
7	Swine	2	2	2	2	32.1 a	25.7 b	17.6 b	14.8 bc	14.6 bc	13.1 b	29.5 a	26.9 bc
9	Swine	4	4	4	4	33.0 a	29.5 a	19.6 a	18.3 a	15.1 ab	17.7 a	28.2 a	29.3 a
1	Check	0	0	0	0	24.9 c	18.6 c	15.4 c	16.2 b	11.2 d	8.8 d	23.6 b	19.7 e
13	Urea	1	1	1	1	29.5 ab	21.2 c	16.1 c	14.0 c	13.2 c	10.5 c	28.6 a	21.5 de
14	Urea	2	2	2	2	31.8 a	24.9 b	18.8 ab	15.0 bc	14.4 bc	12.9 b	28.5 a	25.9 c
15	Urea	4	4	4	4	32.3 a	28.3 ab	18.6 ab	18.7 a	16.6 a	16.5 a	28.4 a	28.8 ab

B													
GRAIN PROTEIN (%)													
Trt	Source	Rate				1997 Canola		1998 Wheat		1999 H.barley		2000 Canola	
		'97	'98	'99	'00	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon
1	Check	0	0	0	0	23.6 c	19.5 c	17.1 bc	16.0 bc	12.0 cd	9.0 e	23.9 cd	20.0 c
3	Cattle	1	1	1	1	24.2 c	19.7 c	17.0 bc	16.4 bc	11.3 d	9.0 e	22.8 d	20.4 c
6	Cattle	2	2	2	2	28.2 b	19.9 c	17.0 bc	16.8 b	12.4 cd	9.9 de	26.3 b	20.5 c
8	Cattle	4	4	4	4	27.7 b	20.3 c	18.0 ab	16.8 b	13.0 bc	11.1 c	26.5 b	20.7 c
10	Urea	1	1	1	1	29.3 ab	23.5 b	16.1 c	14.6 d	12.6 c	10.2 cd	25.3 bc	20.4 c
11	Urea	2	2	2	2	29.2 ab	27.5 a	17.9 ab	15.3 cd	13.9 b	13.2 b	28.7 a	24.6 b
12	Urea	4	4	4	4	31.4 a	29.5 a	19.0 a	19.0 a	16.2 a	16.7 a	29.6 a	30.1 a

Means followed by the same letter are not different at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 4. Cumulative adjusted NUE of canola, wheat, hulless barley and canola in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000, respectively, in the swine manure study (A) and in the cattle manure study (B) at Burr and Dixon

A		Cumulative Adjusted %NUE											
Trt	Source	Rate				1997 Canola		1998 Wheat		1999 H.barley		2000 Canola	
		'97	'98	'99	'00	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon
4	Swine	1	1	1	1	33 b	43 ab	25 a	32 ab	18 ab	46 abc	23 a	43 bc
7	Swine	2	2	2	2	25 b	44 ab	17 ab	35 ab	19 ab	40 bc	21 ab	43 bc
9	Swine	4	4	4	4	14 b	36 b	9 b	27 b	10 b	33 c	11 b	29 d
13	Urea	1	1	1	1	53 a	64 a	20 ab	42 a	21 ab	58 a	22 a	62 a
14	Urea	2	2	2	2	54 a	53 ab	22 ab	33 ab	28 a	48 ab	25 a	53 ab
15	Urea	4	4	4	4	23 b	55 ab	9 b	30 ab	20 ab	43 bc	16 ab	41 c

B		Cumulative Adjusted %NUE											
Trt	Source	Rate				1997 Canola		1998 Wheat		1999 H.barley		2000 Canola	
		'97	'98	'99	'00	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon	Burr	Dixon
3	Cattle	1	1	1	1	2 d	5 c	4 c	6 c	-3 c	7 c	5 c	7 b
6	Cattle	2	2	2	2	6 d	2 c	6 c	5 c	7 bc	8 c	8 c	11 b
8	Cattle	4	4	4	4	3 d	3 c	4 c	5 c	7 bc	9 c	6 c	9 b
10	Urea	1	1	1	1	63 a	55 a	34 a	40 a	26 a	60 a	37 a	49 a
11	Urea	2	2	2	2	39 b	49 ab	23 b	33 a	21 ab	53 a	23 b	49 a
12	Urea	4	4	4	4	24 c	37 b	12 c	24 b	17 ab	36 b	19 b	40 a

Means followed by the same letter are not different at 0.05 level of significance.

Conclusion

Application of liquid swine manure resulted in an elevation of pre-seeding available N due to its low C:N ratio and high concentration of ammonium similar to that observed in treatments receiving urea fertilizer. Crop response to rate of swine manure was significant and similar to that caused by urea. In contrast, application of cattle manure did not cause an immediate elevation of available N, however, significant response to rates of cattle manure was observed in terms of N uptake and grain yield in all the four growing seasons. The relatively high C:N ratio of cattle manure may initially cause N immobilization of inorganic N in the manure. However, this N is potentially available to the crop during the growing season as N mineralization takes place. Furthermore, the slow release of N reduces the proportion of N that may be available for loss, thus, improving the N use efficiency over the long term.

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