

Potassium Deficiency in Tobacco

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Over the past week, I have seen several tobacco fields that were experiencing burning leaf tips and margins on mid to upper stalk leaves. These symptoms are characteristic of potassium (K) deficiency. I think a lot of what we are seeing has to do with rapid plant growth since most tobacco is starting to flower. The plant's root system simply can not keep up with the crop's nutrient demands. With the recent rain, I have already seen conditions start to improve to some degree. These symptoms are more common on lighter, sandier soils due to greater leaching potential of mobile nutrients, such as potassium.

With time, the plant should find enough potassium with additional root growth to correct a deficiency. However, if you feel you need additional potassium and have access to a high clearance spreader, 100 pounds of K-Mag (0-0-22) would be a good place to start. If applied, make sure tobacco is dry to reduce likelihood of leaf burn.



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