

# Fertilizing Fish Ponds with Full Stringer 10-52-4

Just as proper fertilization can greatly increase crop yields, fish pond fertilization can increase fish yields 2 to 4 times. In addition to increased yields, the fish will be in better condition. Infertile ponds seldom produce more than 100 pounds of fish per acre, while well-managed, fertile ponds can produce 300-400 pounds of fish per acre.

Fertilization of fish ponds stimulates algae growth. Algae are eaten by zooplankton and insects, which serve as a basic food source for bream and bass. Algae also make the water turn green, which helps shade the pond bottom. This helps prevent the growth of unwanted, bottom-rooted weeds and pond moss.

## Full Stringer Benefits

Old fashioned types of fertilizer used for fish ponds were dry granular 18-46-0 and liquid concentrate 10-34-0. Auburn University research has shown that liquid fertilizers are superior to granular fertilizers in promoting rapid algae growth in fish ponds. Also, the cost of pond fertilization may be reduced, since smaller applications of liquid fertilizers can be used. However, these liquids are very labor- and time-intensive to apply, as they require diluting to 1/10 concentration and a slow rate of application to insure proper mixing in the pond water.

Full Stringer 10-52-4 offers the best of both worlds for fish pond management. Full Stringer requires no premixing or agitation because Full Stringer dissolves rapidly on contact with water. Application can be made by hand or aquatic applicator. One man can do in 1 to 2 hours what usually takes two men all day to do with other fertilizers. With Full Stringer Fish Pond Fertilizer, you fertilize the water, not the bottom of the pond.

## Fish Pond Fertilization Management

Water clarity is a good way to determine when to fertilize. The depth that light can penetrate into the pond is a measure of the algae density. Light penetration can be measured using a Secchi disk, an 8-inch diameter disk quartered with the two opposite quarters white and black,

respectively. Attach the disk to a yardstick or to a pole marked at 12, 18, and 24 inches from the disk.

## Secchi Disk Reading

Secchi Disk Reading	Recommended Management
Greater than 24 inches	Fertilize
18 to 24 inches	Good bloom – do nothing
12 to 18 inches	Dense bloom – watch closely
12 inches or less	Bloom too dense – determine source and be prepared to aerate at night
6 inches or less	Oxygen depletion imminent

## Full String Application Rates and Instructions

NOTE: Use a rate of 4 pounds of product per surface acre of water.

1. Make the first application of fertilizer in early spring when water temperature is consistently above 65°F.

Follow with two additional applications at 2-3 week intervals.

2. Continue applications at 3-4 week intervals or whenever the water clears enough that a white disk attached to a yardstick is visible to a depth of 18 inches.

3. Stop applications by the last week in September.

CAUTION: Over-fertilization of fish ponds can cause serious injury to stock. Do not fertilize ponds when the Secchi disk disappears between 12 and 18 inches – the bloom is too dense. If the disk disappears in less than 12 inches, the bloom is very dense, and a severe oxygen depletion could occur.