

Effect of *Converted Organics™ LC* on the Yield of Processing Onions (3)

California is the largest producer of Onions in the United States with 44,000 acres and more than 950,000 tons harvested each year according to the California Department of Food and Agriculture statistics (2003). At over \$200 million sales annually it is a major crop for the State, ranking behind Celery (#24) and before Cauliflower (#26). Growers are constantly looking for ways to improve harvest yields, crop quality and plant uniformity, in addition to reducing fertilizer and pesticide usage plus protecting the largest investment of all – their soil.



BACKGROUND

Commercial field trials were conducted on conventional processing onions in Coalinga, California. The primary objective was to evaluate the benefits of a microbially-based organic fertilizer product (*Converted Organics™ LC*) against the growers' standard program and quantify the effects on onion production.

Onions were planted on 40 inch sprinkler irrigated beds. *Converted Organics™ LC* was applied at 15 gallons per acre (gpa) at the onset of bulbing to one sprinkler set area of 9.14 acres. The remainder of the field 159.06 acres was used as the control region and did not receive any *Converted Organics™ LC* (see Table 1).

Table 1: Conventional Processing Onions Trial Conditions

Product Tested	<i>Converted Organics™ LC</i>
Crop Tested	Conventional Processing Onions
Planting Date	12/02/02
Application Date	04/26/03
Application Schedule	onset of bulbing
Growers Standard Program	conventional fertilizers
Application Method	Solid set sprinklers
Treatment Location	9.14 acres were treated of a 169.2 acre field
Field Location	10 mi. south of Kerman, CA
Harvest Date	09/13/03 to 09/22/03

DATA COLLECTION and ANALYSIS

The grower kept harvest data separately and reported 22.7 tons per acre yield for the control region and 23.26 tons per acre yield for the *Converted Organics™ LC* treated region. This equated to a 0.56 tons per acre increase in yield after using *Converted Organics™ LC*.

Table 3: Yield Data at Harvest

Attribute	Control	Biolizer LC
Yield, tons/acre	22.7	23.26
Increase (Loss) tpa	-	0.56

Photo 1: Field Processing Onions



CONCLUSIONS

An **improved yield of 0.56 tons per acre** of conventional processing onions was realized when 15 gpa of *Converted Organics™ LC* was used at the onset of bulbing. At \$88.00/ton for onions, this amounts to \$49.28 per acre revenue increase. If *Converted Organics™ LC* was purchased at \$2.00 per gallon, this would result in a **net increase of \$19.28 per acre** in additional revenue.

It is recommended that *Converted Organics™ LC* be used much earlier (after 3 to 4 leaves). Also, spoon feeding the onions (lower rates, more often) at 4 gallons per acre every 2 weeks would have shown better results.