Crop response to salinity has been extensively studied under greenhouse or controlled plot conditions, with little effort to address yield decline under field conditions. With soil salinization becoming increasingly more prevalent on agricultural land, understanding crop response under field conditions is critical for future management decisions, practices, and strategies.

In the July–August 2018 issue of *Agronomy Journal*, researchers evaluate crop productivity across natural gradients in primary soil salinity under conditions pertinent to producers. To do this, corn and soybean yields were assessed in two textures across two growing seasons to generate salinity tolerance thresholds and crop-response functions.

Results from this study demonstrated that crop response to salinity is regulated by soil texture. In silty clay loam soil, productivity did not decline, despite levels of salinity well above previously reported threshold tolerances for corn and soybean (1.7 and 5.0 dS m\(^{-1}\), respectively). Conversely, yield declined in sandy loam soils, but these patterns were opposite those reported in previous literature.

Given the global extent of salinity and corn and soybean production, more relevant threshold tolerances for these crops are invaluable for producers managing saline soils. Furthermore, results from our study demonstrated that texture plays a pivotal role in crop tolerance to salinity.


Each month, we highlight a photo demonstrating great techniques to illustrate research. This month, we thank Benjamin Runkle for this photo by Matt Roby. This photo includes:

1. Equipment in use;
2. Inclusion of people for human interest and sense of scale; and
3. Great colors, thanks to timing with a magnificent sky.

Read the web story about the research here: www.crops.org/science-news/towards-climate-smart-mississippi-basin. For more about the value of good photos in science communication, see http://bit.ly/2hTml5t. You can also consider attending the “Photo 101” training offered by your Societies’ science and public communications director at the next Annual Meeting (see www.acsmeetings.org and www.sacmeetings.org).

Don’t let those photo opp moments pass you by! Keep your camera, or cell phone, ready to capture the exciting visuals of your science!


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