

Melons - Case Study

Situation - Soil health restricting plant root growth

Grower: Darwin, NT
Block Size: 5ha
History: Melons were direct seeded: previous crop did not grow successfully (with very short runner growth - approx 30cm long); this was not harvested and was cultivated into the ground.

Soil Health Program:

Pre-plant: 1t/ha New Era Premium; broadcast and cultivated into planting beds.
Biologicals: Actinobact (1.3L/ha) at 7 & 21 days post seeding via irrigation; trichoderma (1.25kg/ha) at seeding and 14 days after seeding.
Root growth: Super Kelp via irrigation at 5L/ha at 30% ground cover and repeated 10 days late.
Soil Health: Fish Emulsion via irrigation at 10L/ha; 4-5 times during season.
Nutrition: Managed by NAS via tissue testing

Results:

Visual Assessment: Runners were 2-3 times the diameter of control plants; runners ran up to 3 beds across from seeded row.
 Leaf was large and brilliant healthy green colour.
 Tap root had developed up to 5 times diameter of control.

Harvest: Treated block was harvested up to 15-16 weeks of age, other blocks were only harvested until 12 –13 weeks.

Yield: 50t/ha (other blocks 35t/ha)

Profit: 15t/ha extra yield at \$1/kg = \$15,000/ha extra

Income: Extra \$75,000 for block



Control



Soil Essentials Program