

Spreader Calibration - Applying the correct amount of material, whether it is lime, fertilizer, soil amendments, or trace elements, is extremely important in achieving balanced fertility. Every spreader should be calibrated from time to time to ensure that the proper amount of material is being applied. Brand new spreaders, which one would expect to be extremely accurate, are not always calibrated properly. Calibrating a spreader is a relatively simple procedure. The information you need to know is how much material is applied to a specific area at a given setting. The easiest way to determine this is to lay out a tarpaulin or other type of catch sheet and spread some fertilizer or other material on top of it. Then measure the area covered, gather up the material, and weigh it. Now you have an accurate measure of how much material was applied to a given area at the current spreader setting. Adjustments can be made to apply either more or less and the calibration can then be re-checked. Another calibration method that may be easier is to put material in the spreader and then weigh the spreader. Open the spreader ports halfway and spread some of the material, then measure the square area covered. Weigh the spreader again and determine the amount of material that was spread. Then do the following calculation: $W \div A \times 1000 = \text{lbs/ } 1000 \text{ ft}^2$. W = weight and A = area. Example: 5# covers 250 sq. ft. $5 \div 250 = .02 \times 1000 = 20 \text{ lbs/ } 1000 \text{ ft}^2$.