



# Fisiologia Vegetal

## Nutrição vegetal

Primeira aula teórica de nutrição vegetal  
2022-2023

**Cristina Cruz** – [ccruz@ciencias.ulisboa.pt](mailto:ccruz@ciencias.ulisboa.pt)

**Teresa Dias** – [mtdias@ciencias.ulisboa.pt](mailto:mtdias@ciencias.ulisboa.pt)



# Nutrição Vegetal

**O objectivo deste bloco de aulas teóricas é dar aos alunos os fundamentos básicos da nutrição vegetal**

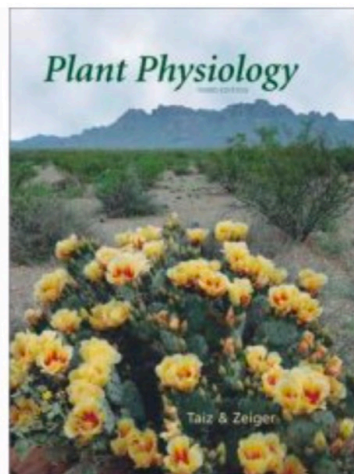
**Objectivos da aula:**

- 1 – Definição de nutriente essencial
- 2 – Classificação dos nutrientes essenciais
- 3 – Hidroponia e soluções nutritivas
- 4 – A lei do mínimo
- 5 – Sintomas de deficiência de nutrientes



# Nutrição Vegetal

## Leitura obrigatória



### **Plant Physiology, 3rd ed** by Lincoln Taiz and Eduardo Zeiger

Hardcover: 690 pages  
Publisher: Sinauer Associates; 3 edition (Aug 30 2002)  
Language: English  
ISBN: 0878938230

Chapter

5

### *Mineral Nutrition*

MINERAL NUTRIENTS ARE ELEMENTS acquired primarily in the form of inorganic ions from the soil. Although mineral nutrients continually cycle through all organisms, they enter the biosphere predominantly through the root systems of plants, so in a sense plants act as the "miners" of Earth's crust (Epstein 1999). The large surface area of roots and their ability to absorb inorganic ions at low concentrations from the soil solution make mineral absorption by plants a very effective process. After being absorbed by the roots, the mineral elements are translocated to the



## Nutrição Vegetal

**Mineral elements**, those acquired primarily in the form of inorganic ions, continually cycle through all organisms and their environment. Mineral elements enter the biosphere predominantly through the root systems of plants, so in a sense **plants** act like the “miners” of Earth’s crust (Epstein 1972, 1994).

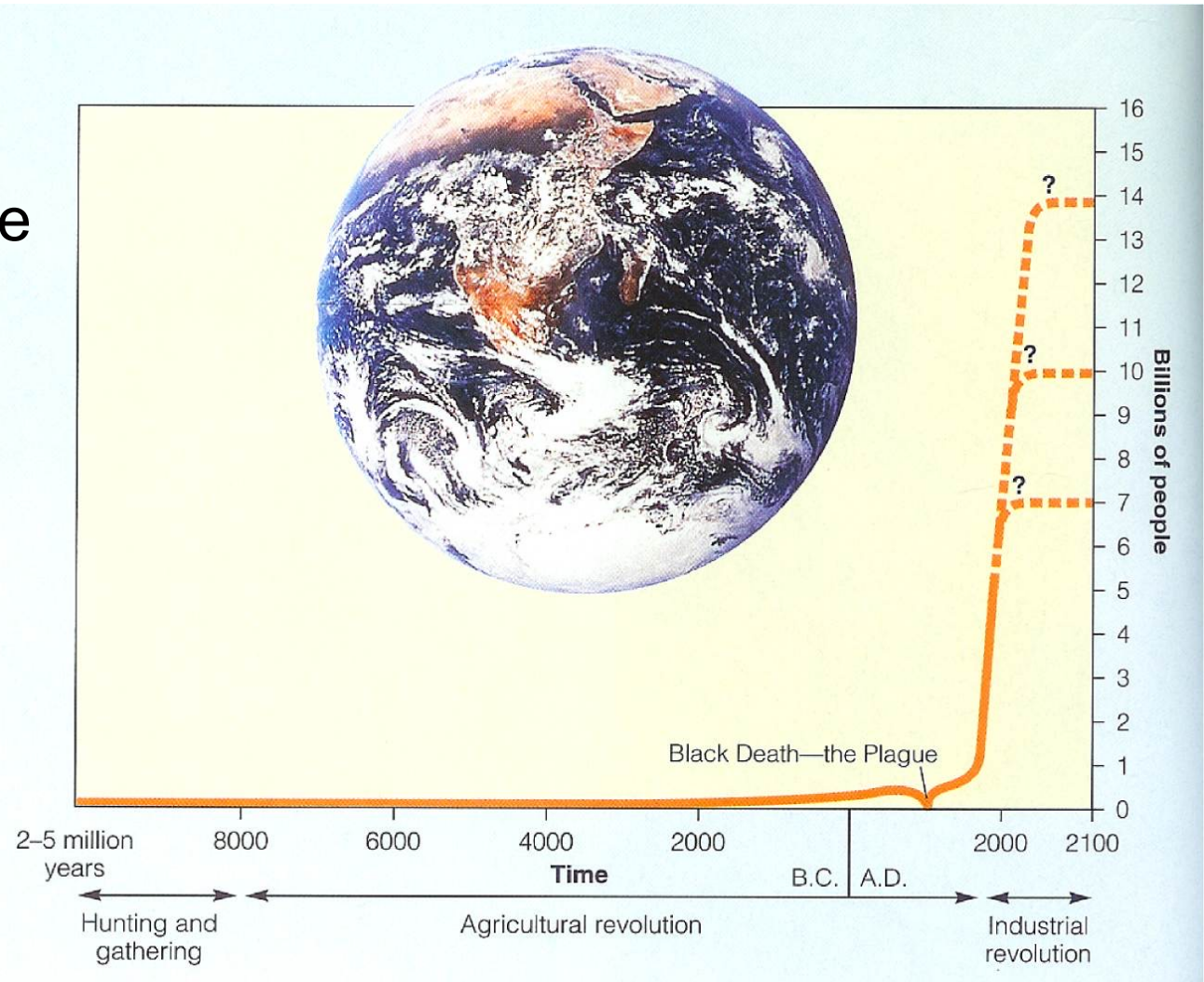
**Plant mineral nutrition is unique** because **green plants**, the only multicellular autotrophic organisms, **can mine inorganic elements from the environment** without having to rely on high-energy compounds synthesized by other organisms.

The study of how plants absorb and assimilate inorganic ions is called mineral nutrition; which is central to **modern agriculture** and **environmental protection**.



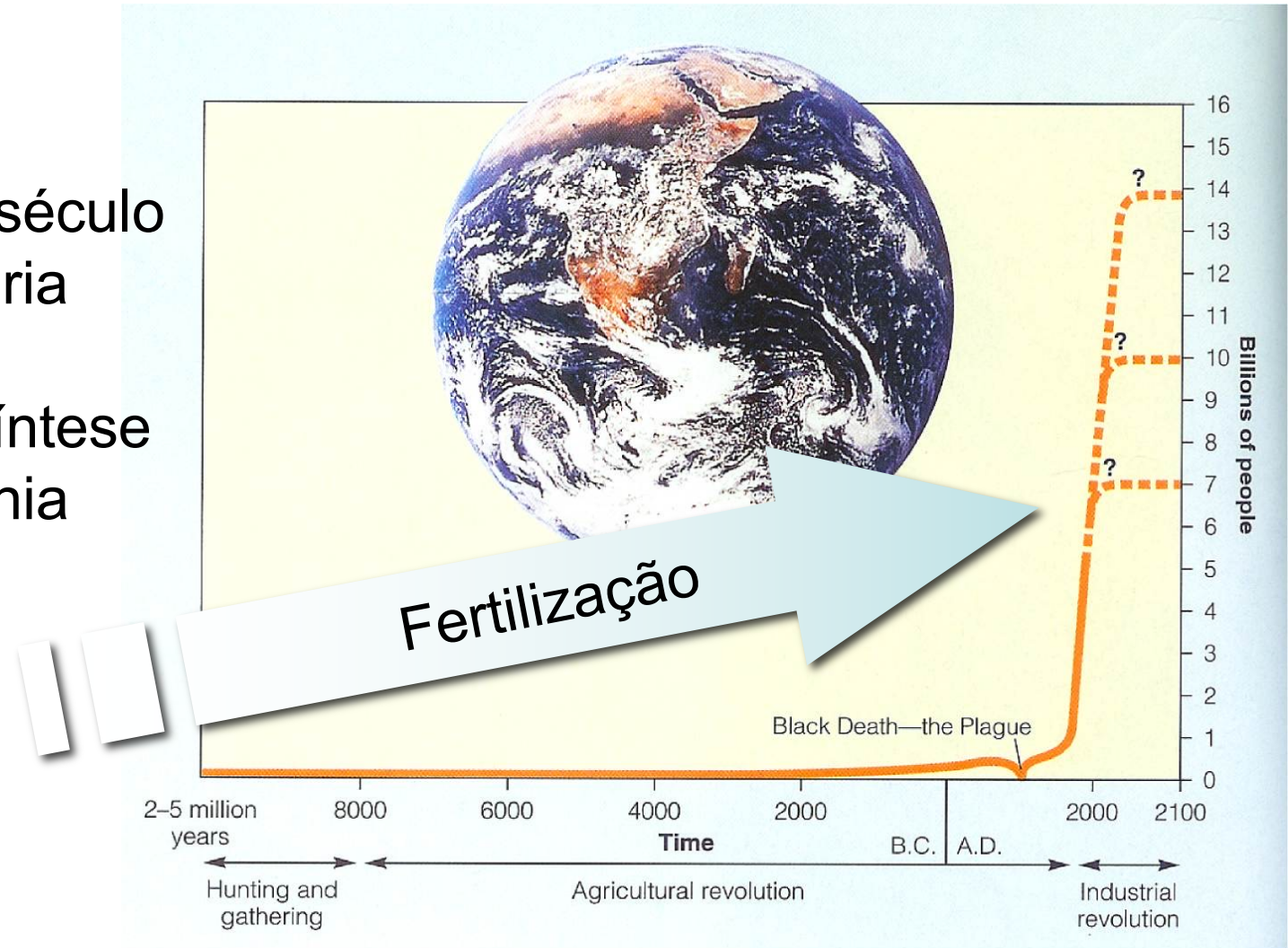
Na realidade, a vida dos quase 8 bilhões de pessoas poderia ser melhor sem:

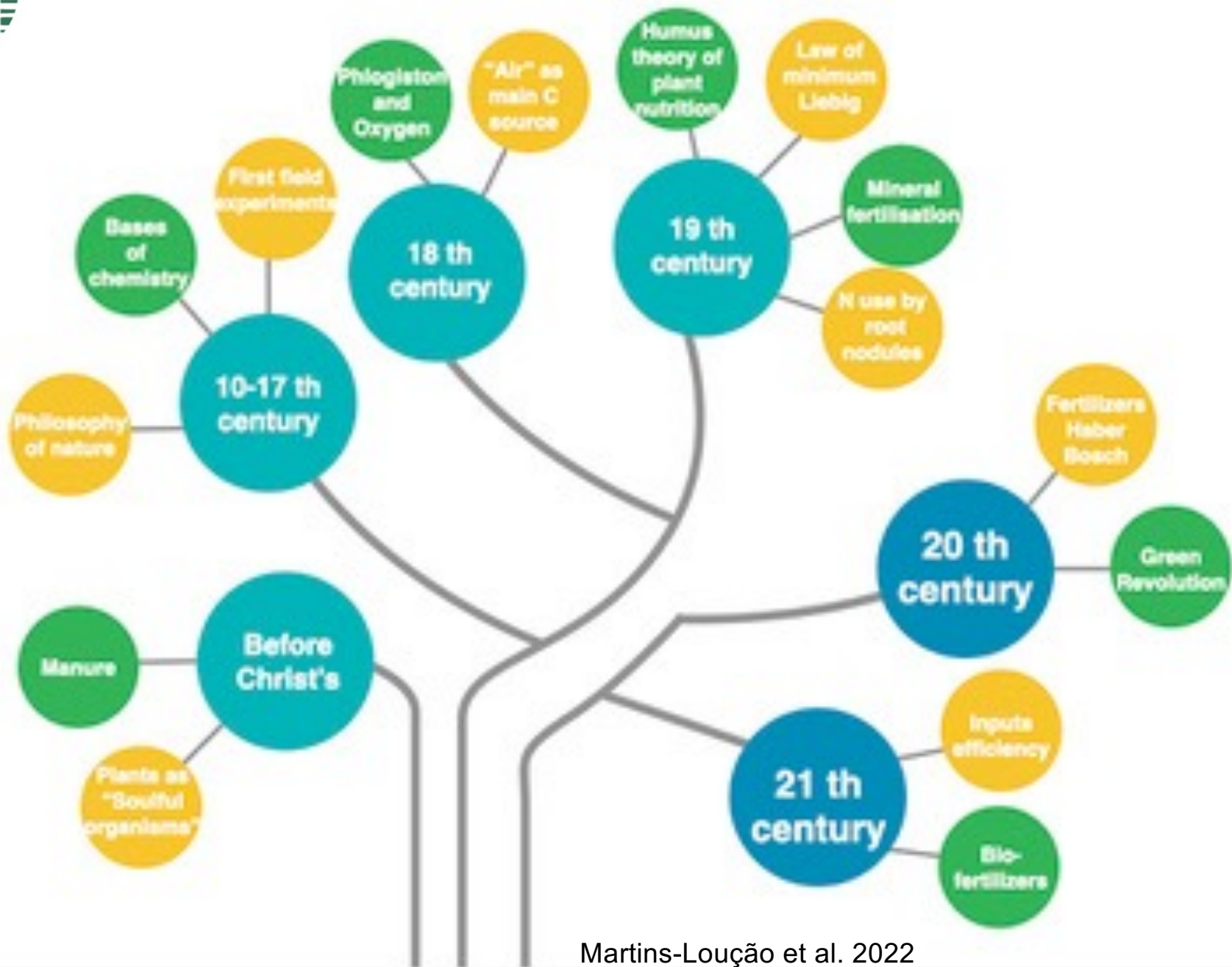
- ✓ Computadores
- ✓ 600 canais de televisão
- ✓ Reactores nucleares
- ✓ Vai-vem espaciais
- ✓ Redes sociais





Mas a explosão demográfica do século XX e XXI não seria possível sem a descoberta da síntese química da amónia







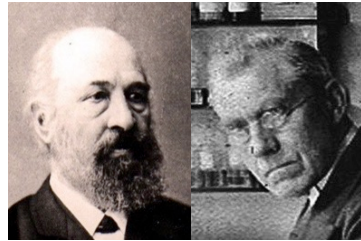
Roots absorb **humus** and transform it into plant substance (384-322 BC)

### Rejection of the humus theory



" The conclusion should have been reached long ago that humus is not such an important substance as we have been led to believe, and that the current doctrine of humus is exceedingly full of contradictions."

Carl Sprengel 1838

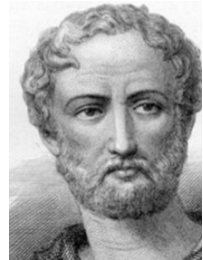


1888 – Hellriegel and Wilfarth

## Organic matter Water Minerals (N)



## Biofertilizers



Pliny (23-79 AC)  
Growing a crop of lupines improves next crop



Justus von Liebig (1844)



Carl Bosch and Fritz Haber 1900

## Regulators





Because of the complex nature of plant–soil–atmosphere relationships, studies in the area of mineral nutrition involve:

- atmospheric chemists
- soil scientists
- hydrologists
- microbiologists
- ecologists
- plant physiologists



## *What defines an “essential” element?*

1. In its absence the plant **cannot complete a normal life cycle**
  2. **Has a clear physiological role**; the element is **part of an essential molecule** (macromolecule, metabolite) inside the plant
- Most elements fall into both categories above (e.g., structural vs. enzyme cofactor)
  - These 17 elements are classified as
    - **9 macronutrients**  
(present at  $> 10$  mmol / kg dry wt.)
    - **8 micronutrients**  
( $< 10$  mmol / kg dry wt.)



A maior parte das plantas necessita destes elementos para viver:

# Periodic Table of Elements

1	2											0					
1 <b>H</b>	IIA											2 <b>He</b>					
3 <b>Li</b>	4 <b>Be</b>											5 <b>B</b>	6 <b>C</b>	7 <b>N</b>	8 <b>O</b>	9 <b>F</b>	10 <b>Ne</b>
11 <b>Na</b>	12 <b>Mg</b>	IIIB	IVB	VB	VIB	VII B	VII		IB	IB	13 <b>Al</b>	14 <b>Si</b>	15 <b>P</b>	16 <b>S</b>	17 <b>Cl</b>	18 <b>Ar</b>	
19 <b>K</b>	20 <b>Ca</b>	21 <b>Sc</b>	22 <b>Ti</b>	23 <b>V</b>	24 <b>Cr</b>	25 <b>Mn</b>	26 <b>Fe</b>	27 <b>Co</b>	28 <b>Ni</b>	29 <b>Cu</b>	30 <b>Zn</b>	31 <b>Ga</b>	32 <b>Ge</b>	33 <b>As</b>	34 <b>Se</b>	35 <b>Br</b>	36 <b>Kr</b>
37 <b>Rb</b>	38 <b>Sr</b>	39 <b>Y</b>	40 <b>Zr</b>	41 <b>Nb</b>	42 <b>Mo</b>	43 <b>Tc</b>	44 <b>Ru</b>	45 <b>Rh</b>	46 <b>Pd</b>	47 <b>Ag</b>	48 <b>Cd</b>	49 <b>In</b>	50 <b>Sn</b>	51 <b>Sb</b>	52 <b>Te</b>	53 <b>I</b>	54 <b>Xe</b>
55 <b>Cs</b>	56 <b>Ba</b>	57 <b>*La</b>	72 <b>Hf</b>	73 <b>Ta</b>	74 <b>W</b>	75 <b>Re</b>	76 <b>Os</b>	77 <b>Ir</b>	78 <b>Pt</b>	79 <b>Au</b>	80 <b>Hg</b>	81 <b>Tl</b>	82 <b>Pb</b>	83 <b>Bi</b>	84 <b>Po</b>	85 <b>At</b>	86 <b>Rn</b>
87 <b>Fr</b>	88 <b>Ra</b>	89 <b>+Ac</b>	104 <b>Rf</b>	105 <b>Ha</b>	106	107	108	109	110								

\* Lanthanide Series

+ Actinide Series

58 <b>Ce</b>	59 <b>Pr</b>	60 <b>Nd</b>	61 <b>Pm</b>	62 <b>Sm</b>	63 <b>Eu</b>	64 <b>Gd</b>	65 <b>Tb</b>	66 <b>Dy</b>	67 <b>Ho</b>	68 <b>Er</b>			
90 <b>Th</b>	91 <b>Pa</b>	92 <b>U</b>	93 <b>Np</b>	94 <b>Pu</b>	95 <b>Am</b>	96 <b>Cm</b>	97 <b>Bk</b>	98 <b>Cf</b>	99 <b>Es</b>	100 <b>Fm</b>	101 <b>Md</b>	102 <b>No</b>	103 <b>Lr</b>

A química da vida é a química dos elementos leves



# I. Plant Nutrients - amount

## Macro/Micronutrients

Hydroponics allowed us to see what was needed

According to their concentration in the plant tissue nutrients may be classified in two categories

- 1. Macronutrients (C, O, H, N, S, P, K, Ca, Mg)
  - Majority of the time used for the main organic compounds
- 2. Micronutrients (Cl, Fe, B, Mn, Zn, Cu, Mo, Ni)
  - Mostly cofactors for particular enzymes (Fe -> Cytochromes)



All mineral nutrients together make up less than 4% of plant mass, yet plant growth is very sensitive to nutrient deficiency

**TABLE 5.1**  
Adequate tissue levels of elements that may be required by plants (Part 1)

Element	Chemical symbol	Concentration in dry matter (%)	Relative number of atoms with respect to molybdenum
<b>Obtained from water or carbon dioxide</b>			
Hydrogen	H	6	60,000,000
Carbon	C	45	40,000,000
Oxygen	O	45	30,000,000
<b>Obtained from the soil</b>			
<b>Macronutrients</b>			
Nitrogen	N	1.5	1,000,000
Potassium	K	1.0	250,000
Calcium	Ca	0.5	125,000
Magnesium	Mg	0.2	80,000
Phosphorus	P	0.2	60,000
Sulfur	S	0.1	30,000
Silicon	Si	0.1	30,000

Not considered mineral nutrients

Source: Epstein 1972, 1999.

<sup>a</sup> The values for the nonmineral elements (H, C, O) and the macronutrients are percentages. The values for micronutrients are expressed in parts per million.



## Micronutrients are present in very low concentrations

**TABLE 5.1**

Adequate tissue levels of elements that may be required by plants (Part 2)

Element	Chemical symbol	Concentration in dry matter ppm	Relative number of atoms with respect to molybdenum
<b>Obtained from the soil</b>			
<b>Micronutrients</b>			
Chlorine	Cl	100	3,000
Iron	Fe	100	2,000
Boron	B	20	2,000
Manganese	Mn	50	1,000
Sodium	Na	10	400
Zinc	Zn	20	300
Copper	Cu	6	100
Nickel	Ni	0.1	2
Molybdenum	Mo	0.1	1

Very low concentrations, but still essential because of specialized roles in metabolism

Source: Epstein 1972, 1999.

<sup>a</sup> The values for the nonmineral elements (H, C, O) and the macronutrients are percentages. The values for micronutrients are expressed in parts per million.

# II. Plant Nutrients – function



Classification of plant mineral nutrients according to biochemical function	
Mineral nutrient	Functions
<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Nutrients that are part of carbon compounds</b>
N	Constituent of amino acids, amides, proteins, nucleic acids, nucleotides, coenzymes, hexoamines, etc.
S	Component of cysteine, cystine, methionine, and proteins. Constituent of lipoic acid, coenzyme A, thiamine pyrophosphate, glutathione, biotin, adenosine-5'-phosphosulfate, and 3-phosphoadenosine.
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Nutrients that are important in energy storage or structural integrity</b>
P	Component of sugar phosphates, nucleic acids, nucleotides, coenzymes, phospholipids, phytic acid, etc. Has a key role in reactions that involve ATP.
Si	Deposited as amorphous silica in cell walls. Contributes to cell wall mechanical properties, including rigidity and elasticity.
B	Complexes with mannitol, mannan, polymannuronic acid, and other constituents of cell walls. Involved in cell elongation and nucleic acid metabolism.
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>Nutrients that remain in ionic form</b>
K	Required as a cofactor for more than 40 enzymes. Principal cation in establishing cell turgor and maintaining cell electroneutrality.
Ca	Constituent of the middle lamella of cell walls. Required as a cofactor by some enzymes involved in the hydrolysis of ATP and phospholipids. Acts as a second messenger in metabolic regulation.
Mg	Required by many enzymes involved in phosphate transfer. Constituent of the chlorophyll molecule.
Cl	Required for the photosynthetic reactions involved in O <sub>2</sub> evolution.
Mn	Required for activity of some dehydrogenases, decarboxylases, kinases, oxidases, and peroxidases. Involved with other cation-activated enzymes and photosynthetic O <sub>2</sub> evolution.
Na	Involved with the regeneration of phosphoenolpyruvate in C <sub>4</sub> and CAM plants. Substitutes for potassium in some functions.
<b>Group 4</b>	<b>Nutrients that are involved in redox reactions</b>
Fe	Constituent of cytochromes and nonheme iron proteins involved in photosynthesis, N <sub>2</sub> fixation, and respiration.
Zn	Constituent of alcohol dehydrogenase, glutamic dehydrogenase, carbonic anhydrase, etc.
Cu	Component of ascorbic acid oxidase, tyrosinase, monoamine oxidase, uricase, cytochrome oxidase, phenolase, laccase, and plastocyanin.
Ni	Constituent of urease. In N <sub>2</sub> -fixing bacteria, constituent of hydrogenases.
Mo	Constituent of nitrogenase, nitrate reductase, and xanthine dehydrogenase.



# III. Plant Nutrients - mobility

But nutrients can also be classified according to their mobility in the plant

**Mineral elements classified on the basis of their mobility within a plant and their tendency to retranslocate during deficiencies**

Mobile	Immobile
Nitrogen	Calcium
Potassium	Sulfur
Magnesium	Iron
Phosphorus	Boron
Chlorine	Copper
Sodium	
Zinc	
Molybdenum	

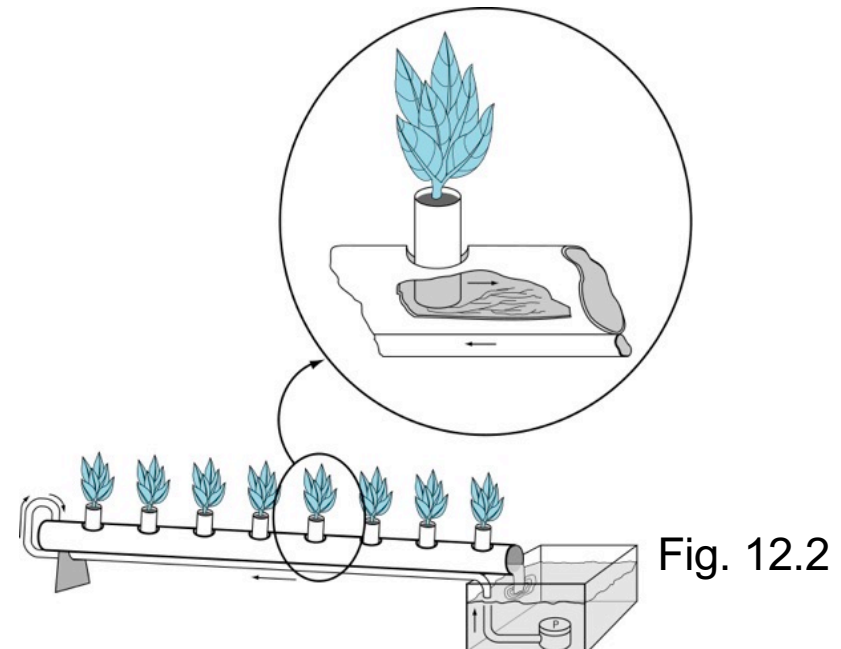
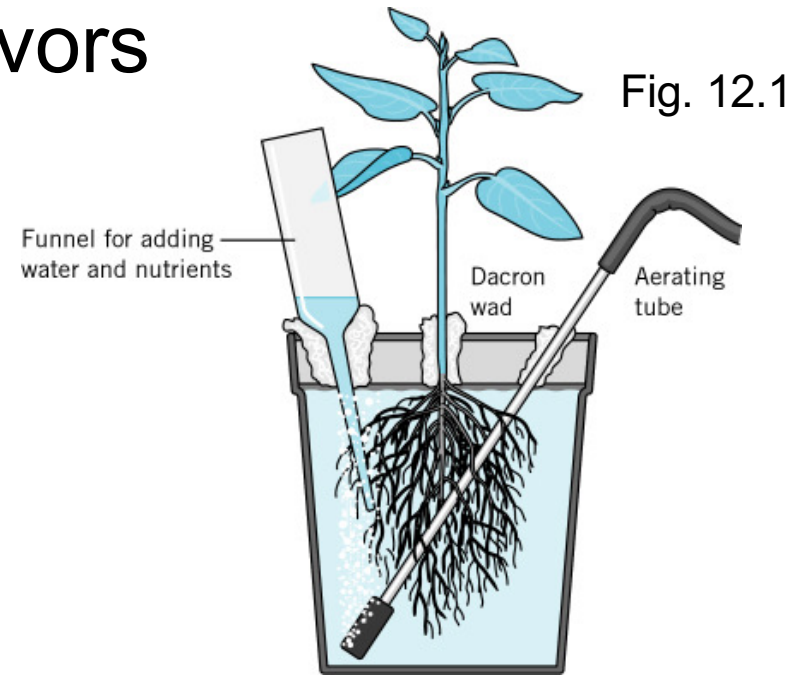
*Note:* Elements are listed in the order of their abundance in the plant.





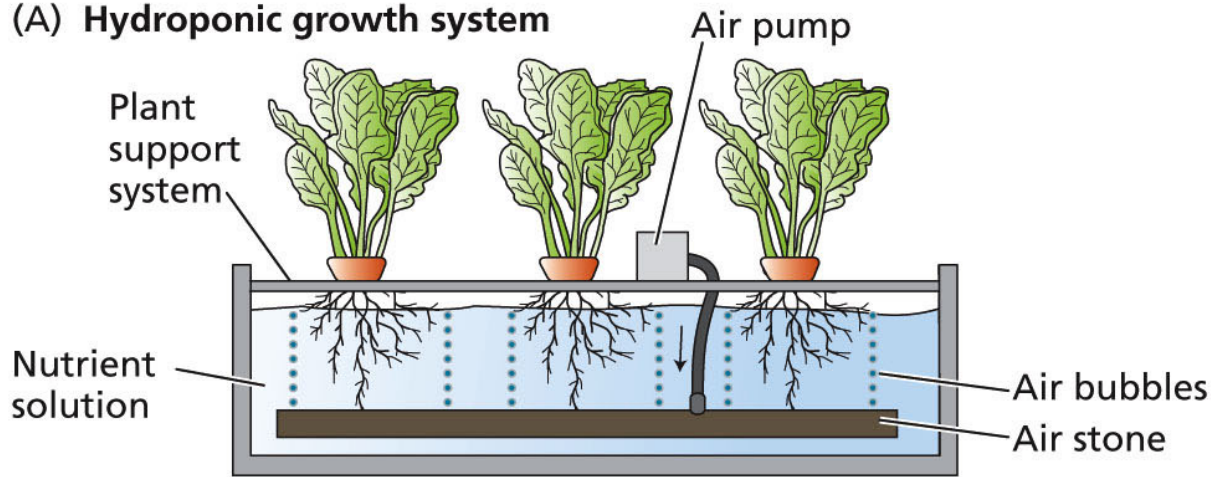
# Hydroponic culture techniques come in different flavors

- **Main disadvantage** of simple solution culture → as plant grows, it selectively depletes certain minerals
  - When one becomes limiting, growth will slow significantly
  - Can grow in vermiculite/perlite (inert, non-nutritive) and refertilize daily
- Commercially, it is often cheaper and easier to continuously bathe roots in a nutrient solution (**nutrient film technique**)
  - Aerates
  - Standard nutrient level maintained
  - Continuous process monitoring
- To define “essential”, researchers need inert materials contributing low levels of nutrients (NO METAL PARTS!)

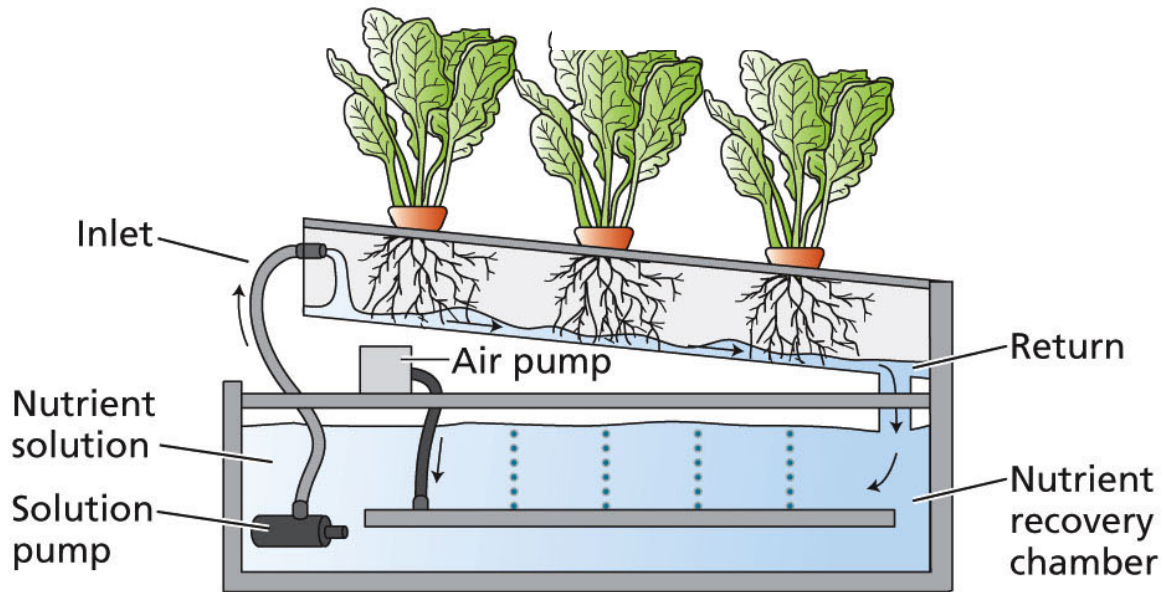




(A) Hydroponic growth system



(B) Nutrient film growth system







HD NHK WORLD



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_WuJ9P1u-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_WuJ9P1u-k)



# Hydroponics

Composition of a modified Hoagland nutrient solution for growing plants							
Compound	Molecular weight	Concentration of stock solution	Concentration of stock solution	Volume of stock solution per liter of final solution	Element	Final concentration of element	
	g mol <sup>-1</sup>	mM	g L <sup>-1</sup>	mL		μM	ppm
<b>Macronutrients</b>							
KNO <sub>3</sub>	101.10	1,000	101.10	6.0	N	16,000	224
Ca(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> ·4H <sub>2</sub> O	236.16	1,000	236.16	4.0	K	6,000	235
NH <sub>4</sub> H <sub>2</sub> PO <sub>4</sub>	115.08	1,000	115.08	2.0	Ca	4,000	160
MgSO <sub>4</sub> ·7H <sub>2</sub> O	246.48	1,000	246.49	1.0	P	2,000	62
					S	1,000	32
					Mg	1,000	24
<b>Micronutrients</b>							
KCl	74.55	25	1.864	2.0	Cl	50	1.77
H <sub>3</sub> BO <sub>3</sub>	61.83	12.5	0.773		B	25	0.27
MnSO <sub>4</sub> ·H <sub>2</sub> O	169.01	1.0	0.169		Mn	2.0	0.11
ZnSO <sub>4</sub> ·7H <sub>2</sub> O	287.54	1.0	0.288		Zn	2.0	0.13
CuSO <sub>4</sub> ·5H <sub>2</sub> O	249.68	0.25	0.062		Cu	0.5	0.03
H <sub>2</sub> MoO <sub>4</sub> (85% MoO <sub>3</sub> )	161.97	0.25	0.040		Mo	0.5	0.05
NaFeDTPA (10% Fe)	468.20	64	30.0	0.3–1.0	Fe	16.1–53.7	1.00–3.00
<b>Optional<sup>a</sup></b>							
NiSO <sub>4</sub> ·6H <sub>2</sub> O	262.86	0.25	0.066	2.0	Ni	0.5	0.03
Na <sub>2</sub> SiO <sub>3</sub> ·9H <sub>2</sub> O	284.20	1,000	284.20	1.0	Si	1,000	28

Source: After Epstein 1972.

Note: The macronutrients are added separately from stock solutions to prevent precipitation during preparation of the nutrient solution. A combined stock solution is made up containing all micronutrients except iron. Iron is added as sodium ferric diethylenetriaminepentaacetate (NaFeDTPA, trade name Qba-Geigy Sequestrene 330 Fe; see Figure 5.2); some plants, such as maize, require the higher level of iron shown in the table.

<sup>a</sup>Nickel is usually present as a contaminant of the other chemicals, so it may not need to be added explicitly. Silicon, if included, should be added first and the pH adjusted with HCl to prevent precipitation of the other nutrients.



# Hydroponics

At

<https://www.2lua.vn/agritec/hydroponics-calculator.html?hl=en>

You can see the basics of an hydroponic calculator that Combines plants needs with the available chemicals in order to rich a certain production.

Try!



## Justus von Leibig (1844)

- ✓ Estabelece através da **experimentação** o carácter **puramente mineral** da nutrição vegetal.
- ✓ Análise da composição química das cinzas
- ✓ Hidroponia



Lei do mínimo



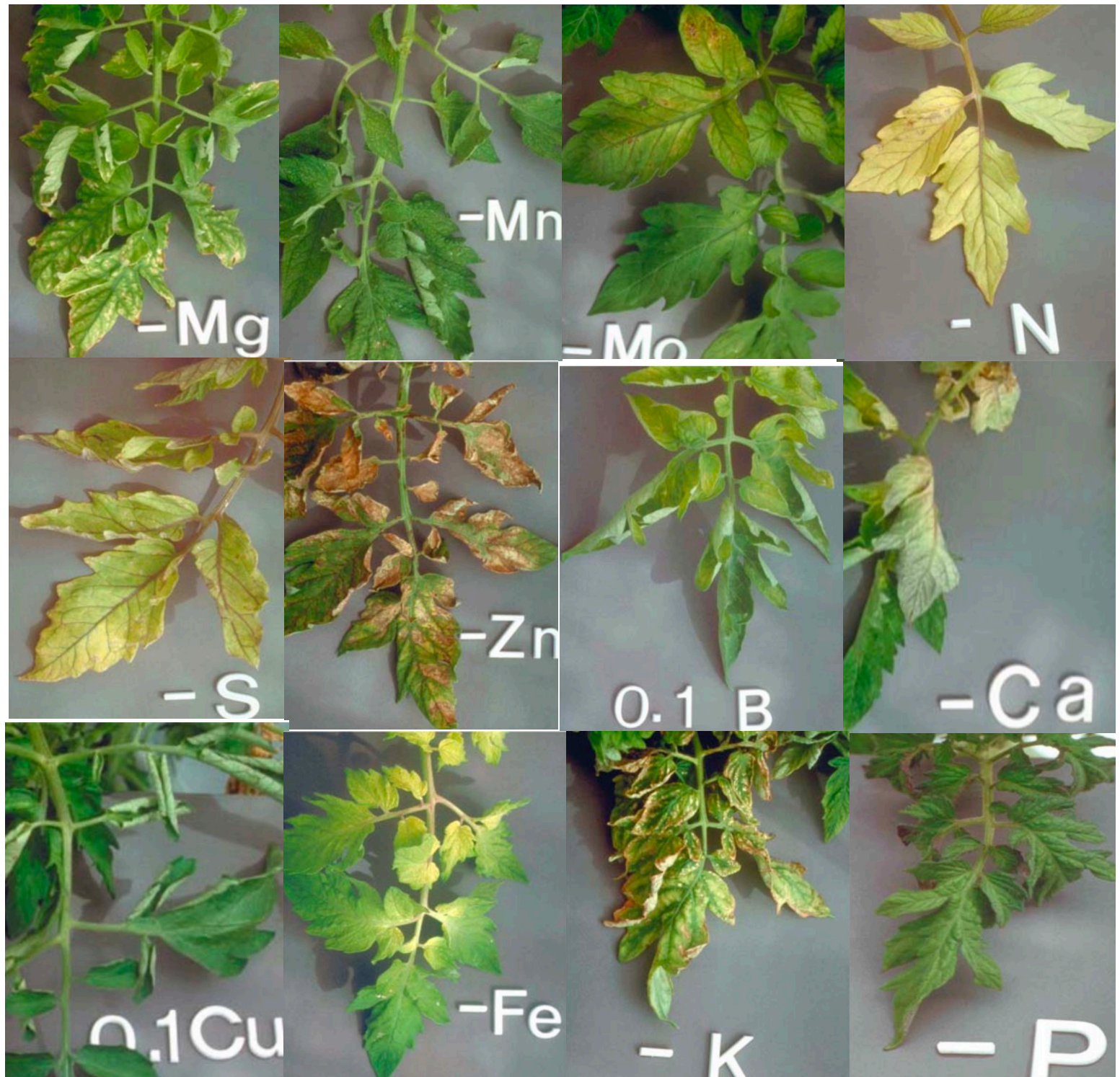
Hidroponia



## **Plant nutrient deficiency symptoms:**

- Are the expression of metabolic disorders resulting from insufficient supply of an essential nutrient.
- These are related to the roles played by essential elements in normal plant metabolism and functions (see slide 16).
- Consider to which extent an element can be recycled from older to younger leaves (see slide 15).

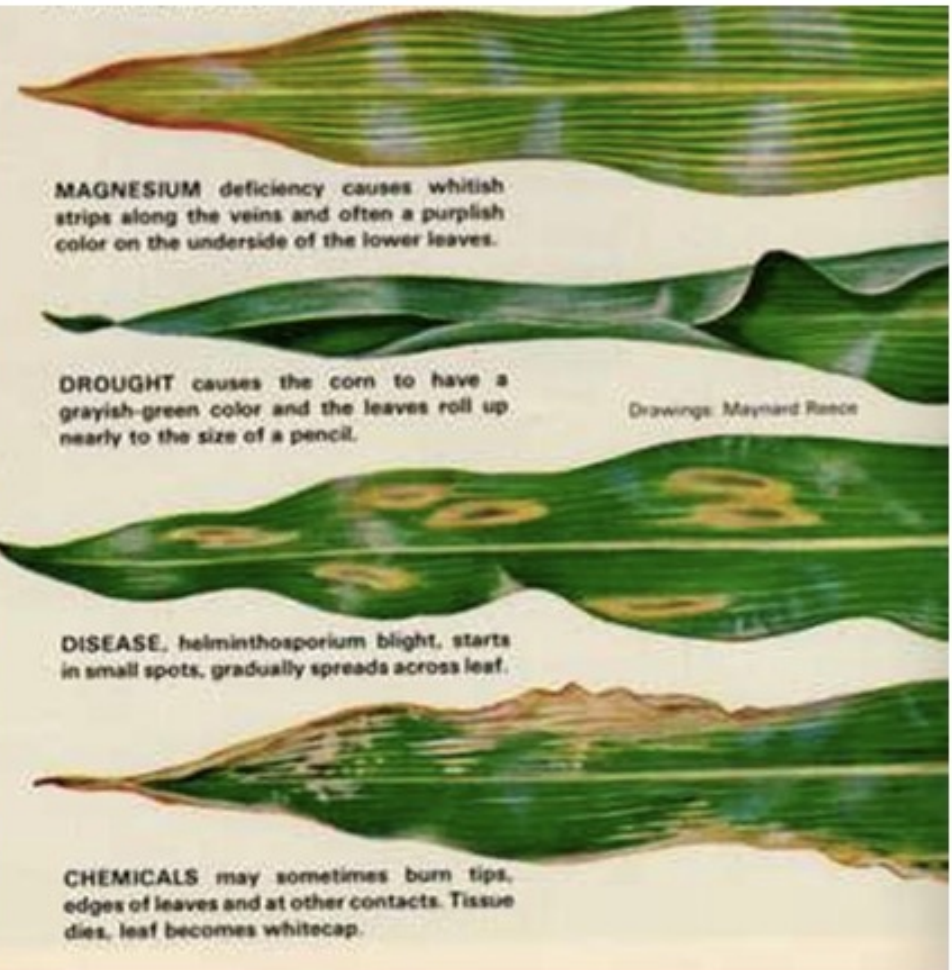
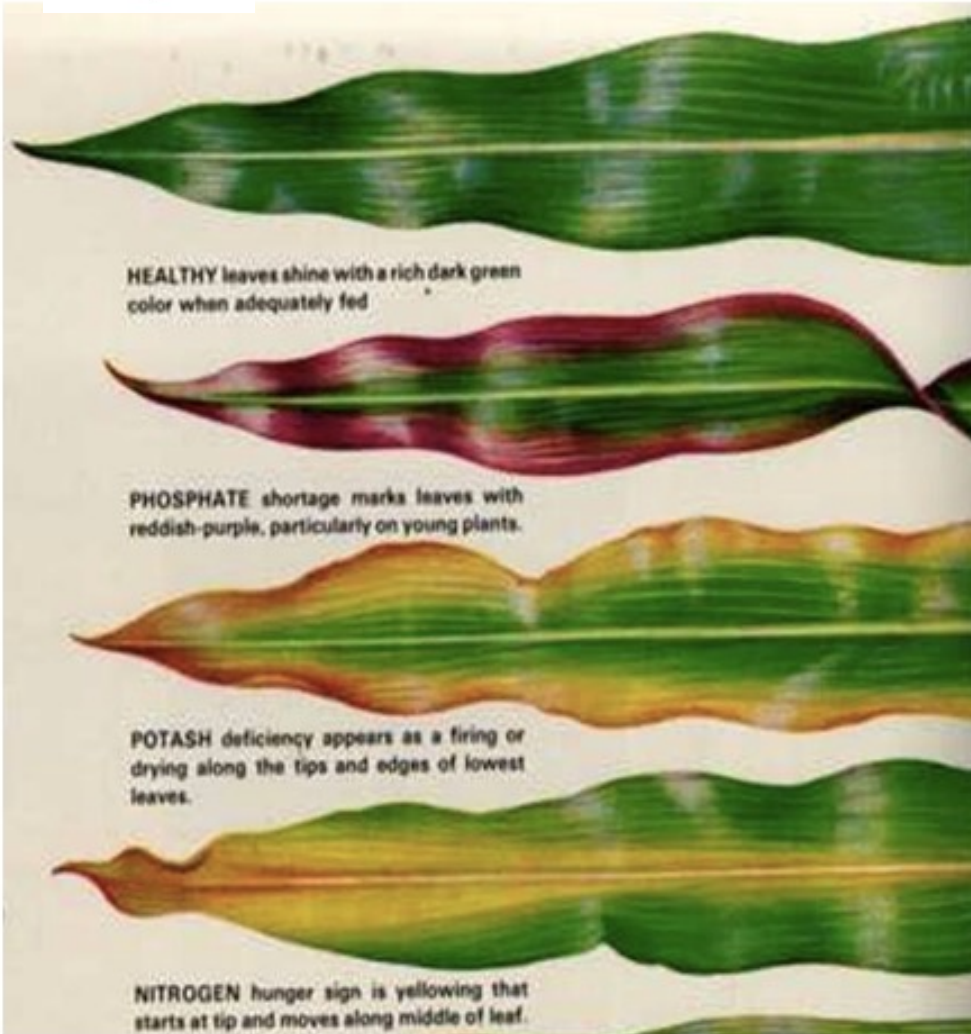






## Nutritional Deficiencies in Corn

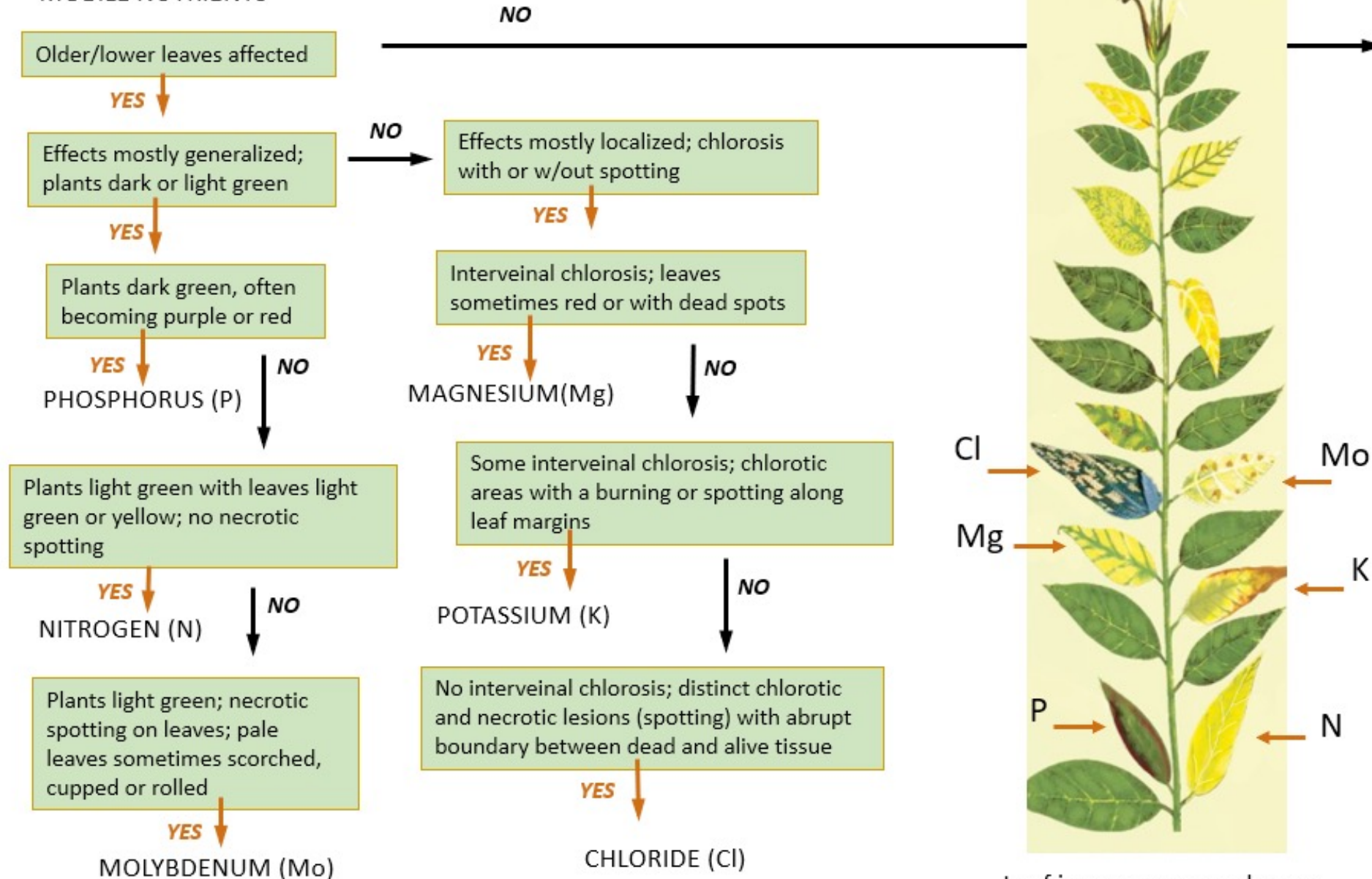
### NUTRIENT DEFICIENCY SYMPTOMS IN CORN



# Visual tissue assessment

In Nutrient Management Module 9  
<http://landresources.montana.edu/nm>

## MOBILE NUTRIENTS



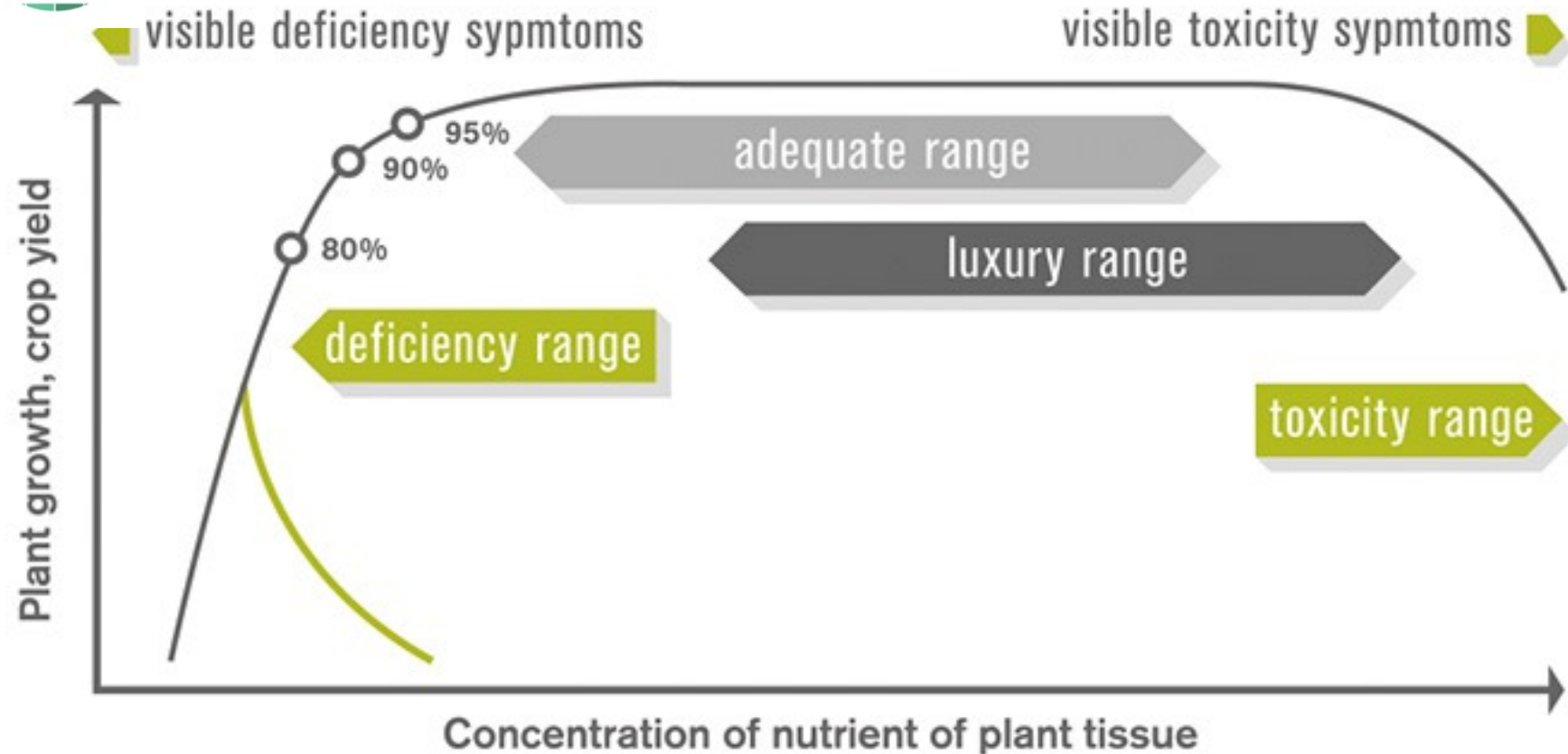
Leaf image source unknown



## PLANT NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCIES SYMPTOMS CHART

Symptoms	Ca	S	Fe	Mn	Zn	B	Cu	N	P	K	Mg	Mo
Chlorosis throughout leaves		Y/O citrus						O Starts @ tips		O Starts @ edge		O
Interveinal chlorosis leaves			Y	Y	Y/O legumes						O	
Chlorosis in tiny spots - dicot				Y								
Grey-green spots-monocot				Y								
Bleached/blanched leaves			Y	Y			Y	O				O
Dark green/purple leaf/stem									O			
Bronzed leaves possible					Y						O	
Marginal/tip leaf chlorosis burn								O starts @ tips		O starts @ edge		O starts @ edge
Necrotic spots on leaves										O		
Growing tips die	Y					Y	Y					
Drooping leaves/wilting											O	
Leaf drop							Y	O				O
Strap-like leaves					Y							
Rosetting of leaves					Y	Y	Y					
Distorted leaves	Y					Y	Y			O		O
Reduced flowering/fruiting	*							*	*	*		*
Weak/brittle/thin stems		*							*	*		
Stunted growth						*	*	*	*	*		*
Abnormal root growth	*				*				*			

**Key:** Calcium(Ca); Sulfur(S); Iron(Fe); Manganese(Mn); Zinc (Zn); Boron(B); Copper(Cu); Nitrogen(N); Phosphorus (P); Potassium(K); Magnesium(Mg); Molybdenum(Mo)      Y = Younger    O = Older    \* = present    Chlorosis = Yellow



- Plant tissue analysis is routinely used by farmers for N, P and K;
- Can be done for different plant tissues and organs (leaves of different ages and positions, stems, roots, fruits, etc.)
- More accurate than visual symptoms analysis; can be used to correct deficiencies