# Soybean Carbon and Nitrogen Accumulation As Affected By Nitrogen Supply

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# Abstract

While carbon (C) markets are booming, there is scarce information about how much C is accumulated and returned to the soil in soybean crops. Soybean residue is also considered a valuable asset because it impacts the nitrogen (N) management of the following crops. Moreover, recent research has found N limitation in high-yielding soybeans. However, the impact of N limitation on C and N accumulation and on the quality of the soybean residue is unknown. The objective of this study was to quantify C and N accumulation and residue quality (C:N ratio) of high-yielding soybean crops with and without N limitation. Replicated experiments were conducted in seven irrigated soybean fields in Nebraska (USA). These fields had consistently achieved yields >4.5 Mg ha<sup>-1</sup> in previous years. A zero-N treatment was compared against a Full-N treatment that ensured ample N supply during the entire crop season through six applications of N fertilizer: V1= 87, V2= 87, V4= 174, R1= 261, R3= 261, and R5= 261 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup>. Aboveground dry matter separated by plant organs was measured weekly from emergence to physiological maturity. Plant tissue samples were analyzed for N and C concentration. The N limitation reduced the C and N accumulation at physiological maturity in soybeans by 9.5% and 11.5%, respectively. The main impact was on the C and N accumulated in the residue of soybeans. Soybean crops limited by N supply had higher C:N ratio. About 50% of total C accumulated by high-yielding soybean crops remains in the residue. Nitrogen limitation can affect the quantity and quality of soybean residue.

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