

Soil Nutrient Management = Financial Savings



key points

- Fertiliser prices have more than doubled over the last year
- Ammonium Nitrate – domestic AN sold out until Jan 09 when it is priced at over £400/t
- Triple Super Phosphate currently circa. £700/t
- Muriate of Potash currently circa. £600-630/t

- The impact of these price increases on a typical mixed arable unit*:

Aug 2008	£247/ha	£148,200 (increase of 168%)
Aug 2007	£92/ha	£55,200
Aug 2006	£88/ha	£52,800

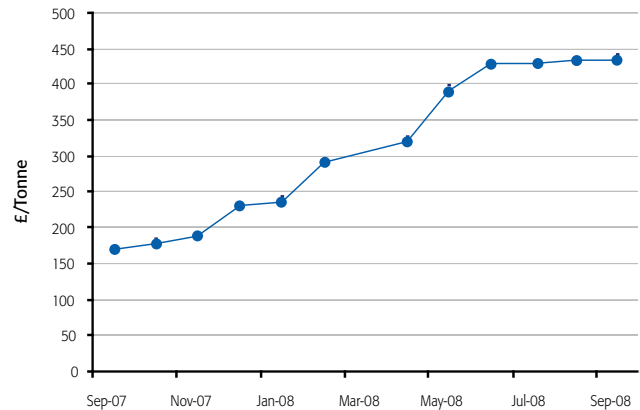
*Based on 200ha each of milling & feed wheat, 100ha OSR, 100ha of beans & corresponding fertiliser rates.

With current costs it is understandable that the natural reaction of farmers is to consider cutting back on fertiliser usage.

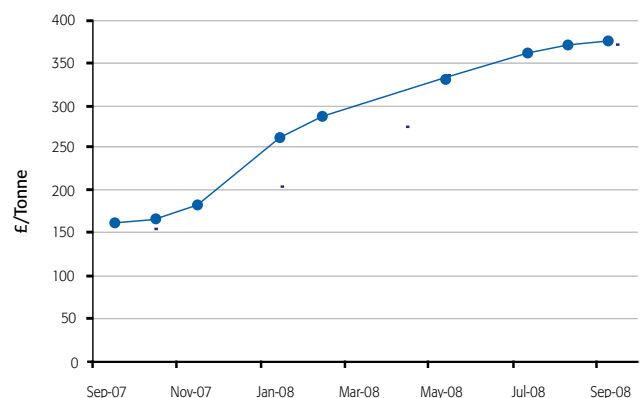
However, in order to produce crops in the most effective and efficient manner there is scope to manage the required plant nutrients by making better use of organic nutrients, such as manures and slurries. Although it must be recognised that the nutrient content of these products can be variable (see next page) and therefore their analysis is important for integrating their application with fertilisers.



Blended 20.10.10 (bags)



AN (UK – bags)



Nutrient values for various Manures/ Solid Wastes**

Nitrogen (N):- 0.34 – 104 units/t (0.17 – 52kg/t):

Fertiliser Replacement Value:- 20p - £60/t

Phosphate (P₂O₅):- 0.22 – 90 units/t (0.11 – 45kg/t):

Fertiliser Replacement Value:- 17p - £68/t

Potassium (K₂O):- 0.12 – 68 units/t (0.06 – 34kg/t):

Fertiliser Replacement Value:- 9p - £53/t

** Based on extensive analysis carried out by NRM (2006-2008) & current fertilisers rates. Values cited above are Total Nutrient Values of the material tested; the actual financial replacement value will be affected by the inherent availability of nutrients in the material. Information as to the availability of nutrients in Organic Manures can be found in section 2 of the RB209.

Nutrient values for Slurries/ Effluents**

Nitrogen (N):- 0.27 – 106 units per 1000 gallons (0.03 – 11.8kg/m³):

Fertiliser Replacement Value:- 3p - £14/m³

Phosphate (P₂O₅):- 0.09 – 55.6 units per 1000 gallons (0.01 – 6.18kg/m³):

Fertiliser Replacement Value:- 2p - £9/m³

Potassium (K₂O):- 0.09 – 74.7 units per 1000 gallons (0.01 – 8.30kg/m³):

Fertiliser Replacement Value:- 2p - £13/m³

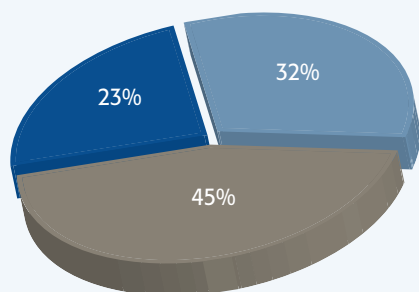
By understanding the nutrient status of the soil and available organic nutrients, sensible and informed decisions can be made about fertiliser use.

NRM Laboratories, the largest agricultural testing facility in the UK, analyses in excess of 270,000 soil samples per year.

In reviewing the soil testing data from 2008 the following information has been compiled regarding the P and K status of soils:

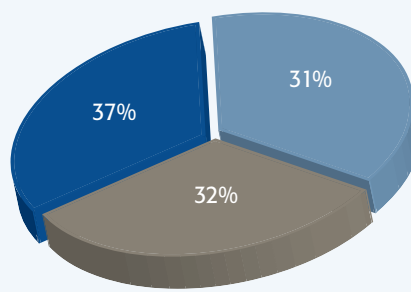
Arable and Forage Crops

Phosphorus 32% of soils at target value



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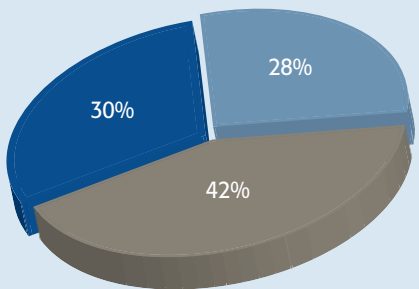
Potassium 31% of soils at target value



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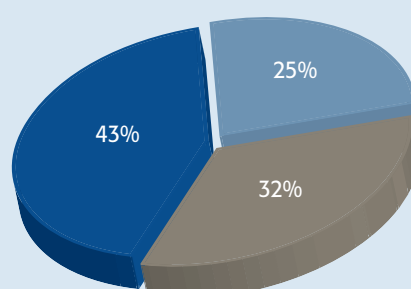
Grassland

Phosphorus 28% of soils at target value



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Potassium 25% of soils at target value



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NB: All soil testing undertaken using analytical methods described in MAFF RB427 (The Analysis of Agricultural Materials), to then allow results to be used within the accepted fertiliser recommendation systems (RB209). Target values for Arable & Forage Crops and Grassland are taken from the RB209.

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For further information on the analytical services that NRM provides in the agricultural sector please contact our customer service team on:

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