

“Am I wasting phosphorus”

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Key Points:

- Phosphorus fertilisers are expected to get more expensive as demand overtakes supply.
- Fertiliser applied phosphorus can be lost rapidly on some sandy soils. There are some simple tests that can be done to indicate the risk of this happening.
- In other soils, phosphorus is fairly immobile and won't be lost to leaching.
- Building up the soil reserves of phosphorus will make P more plant-available, regardless of how or when it is applied.
- The total phosphorus in the soil has value to you, not just the more readily available phosphorus.
- Generally if you maintain a balanced phosphorus regime, you will use everything that you apply in the long run.
- Phosphorus is fixed by most soils. This is generally a good thing as it prevents leaching losses, so unless you have 'high risk soils', don't be concerned about "lockup".
- Don't buy into alternatives to phosphorus fertilisers that claim to improve access to phosphorus stored in the soil.

The fact sheet aims to explain why phosphorus fertilisers are important, how they enter and are stored in the soil, and how farmers can get the most efficient use out of phosphorus fertiliser applications.

The full document is available to be downloaded from the following link;

<http://www.mackillopgroup.com.au/pages/reports/am-i-wasting-phosphorus.php>

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