



For issue, 26 July 2010 by the Fertilizer Association of Ireland.

Efficient use of fertilizers should be driving force within environmental policy

Ensuring that fertilizers are used efficiently to allow productive soils and crops to achieve their full potential is the central theme running through the submission of the Fertilizer Association of Ireland as part of the consultative review of the Nitrates Directive regulations.

In their submission, the Association acknowledges and supports the spirit of the regulations in promoting the benefits of responsible and precise nutrient management, both from the perspective of agronomic efficiency of inputs, and of water quality protection.

However, it is also contended that the perception of 'less is good' when it comes to nutrient use in agriculture should now be replaced by an increased emphasis on the efficient use of fertilizers as the driving force of policy rather than just reduced fertilizer application rates.

The dramatic reductions in the usage of fertilizer nutrients on grassland and arable crops in recent years highlights the need to re-think the approach to nutrient usage in order to ensure that soil fertility and production potential is not compromised in the future.

The submission also highlights a number of specific issues regarding the basis and implementation of the regulations. These include phosphorus fertilizer for pasture reseeding; phosphorus deductions for concentrate feeds; over-complicated and impractical fertilizer planning and soil testing requirements; calendar based restrictions on fertilizer applications; and nitrogen and phosphorus application rates on cereal crops.

Note to Editors:

The full submission is available on the Fertilizer Association of Ireland website: www.fertilizer-assoc.ie

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