National Soil Fertility Status and Trends

Mark Plunkett, Teagasc, Johnstown Castle, Wexford
Soil pH – Grassland Soils 2014

- 67% of soils pH < 6.2
- Dairy - 64%
- Drystock – 69%
- Major Concern!!!
- Target Soil pH 6.3
Soil pH – Tillage Soils 2014

- 60% of soils pH <6.5
- Lime essential for tillage cropping
- Major benefits to liming
- Target Soil pH 6.5

Trend in Soil pH

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The Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority
Soil P – Grassland Soils 2014

- 55% of soils Index 1 & 2
- Stabilised last 2 years
- Approx. 25% Index 3
- Downward trend in Index 4
- **Target Index 3**
Soil K – Grassland Soils 2014

- 50% of soils Index 1 & 2
- Relatively stable over last number of years
- Approx. 28% Index 3
- 21% of soils Index 4
- **Target Index 3**
Soil P – Tillage Soils 2014

- 55% of soils Index 1 & 2
- Improvement since 2012
- Approx. 22% Index 3
- Downward trend Index 4 soils
- Target Index 3
Soil K – Tillage Soils 2014

- 45% of soils Index 1 & 2
- Improvement since 2011
- Approx. 30% Index 3
- Approx. 20% Index 4
- Target Index 3
Grassland Soils With Optimum Soil Fertility

Good Overall Fertility - All Grass:
Soil pH > 6.2; Soil P and K Index 3 or 4

- Optimum 10%
- 90%
Tillage Soils With Optimum Soil Fertility

Good Overall Fertility - Tillage:
Soil pH > 6.5; Soil P and K Index 3 or 4

Optimum
12%

88%
In Summary

- 11% of soils tested have good overall fertility
- 35% of Grassland soils / 40% Tillage soils have soil pH at or above target
- Soil P has stabilised in last 2 years
  - 55% of soils very low to low P status
- Soil K trends somewhat follow P trends
  - 45 to 55% of soils very low to low K status

Further information on soil fertility data on a county by enterprise basis @ www.teagasc.ie
Thank You ...........

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Pat Murphy
Dr. Stan Lalor