

Welcome to the first edition of Fertiliser Update

This new initiative by the International Fertiliser Society is intended to provide you with interest and enjoyment about developments within the fertiliser industry, carrying articles that explain, evaluate, critique or comment upon topical issues.

It will provide a platform for the views and activities of IFS Members, which we hope you will find stimulating, even if you don't always agree with them! As such, it will augment the papers presented at our Conferences, whilst staying true to the Society's traditions of evidence based rigour, independence and commercial neutrality.

Fertiliser Update will be published two or three times a year. It will cover a variety of aspects of both the agronomic and technical parts of our industry, and may venture where our conferences tend not to.

The articles in Fertiliser Update will be proposed and written by IFS Members. We have set up an editorial group whose role is to select articles for each issue, and then edit submissions to ensure that they meet the criteria above.

In this first issue we have three articles, covering a new approach to soil analysis from New Zealand, a demonstration of the IFS's new searchable database of Proceedings, and an article on the hazard of decomposition in fertilisers.

The success of Fertiliser Update will depend upon you. It provides you with a platform to put your views and experiences across to your compatriots. If there is a development in your part of the

industry, that you think is important and that you have views on, let us know what you think and why. If someone writes an article that you don't agree with – don't just sit there; send us your riposte. To help, we have developed a detailed guide on how to write appropriate articles.

We anticipate that Fertiliser Update will evolve over time, as we see what works best and what approaches are most appreciated. So the more feedback you can provide, the better we will be able to make it. Please let our Secretary, Steve Hallam, know what you think.

Enjoy!



Antoine Hoxha
President of the International Fertiliser Society

Soil testing from the sky?

Dr. Ants Roberts, Ravensdown Fertiliser Co-op Ltd

Introduction

New Zealand produces a significant amount of meat and fibre for export from its sheep, beef and deer farms, many of which are large hill country farms ranging in size from 500 to over 3,000 hectares (ha). These farms cover a wide range of varying land slope, aspects, soil properties and altitudes (see Figure 1), all of which affect the potential productivity of the grass/legume pastures, the primary animal feed source on these farms. Soil fertility management has been accomplished by soil testing using traditional methods of physically collecting a number of soil samples representing different management areas of the farm to accommodate the variability